

STEEPLE JIM

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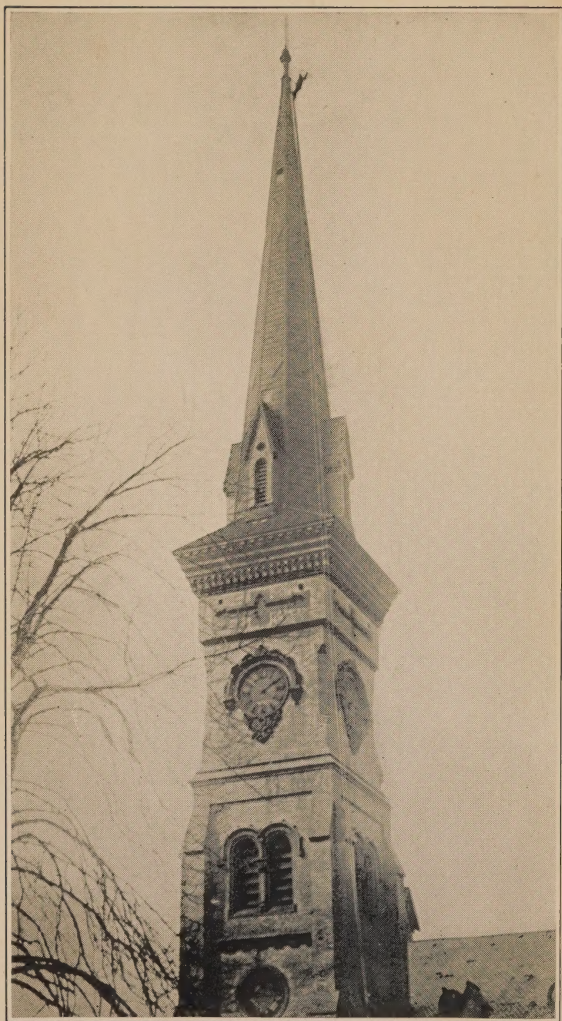
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Steeple Jim

A pupil sends these efforts
of his infant hand to
his teacher.

To Professor F. W. Loetscher
from
W. Wyeth Wilford

Christmas — 1929.



Courtesy Rochester *Times-Union*

Steeple Jim at work on church spire in Rochester, New York

STEEPLE JIM

^W
J. A. Parker

BY

WARREN WYETH WILLARD

FOREWORD BY

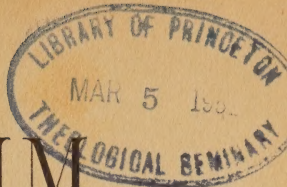
ROBERT DICK WILSON, PH.D., D.D.

PROFESSOR OF SEMITIC PHILOLOGY IN
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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DEDICATED TO
THE YOUTH OF THE WORLD

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STEEPLE JIM'S PREFACE

September 16, 1928.

TO THE WIDE WORLD:

In regards to this book that Mr. Willard has written: he has read it to me and my wife, and as far as we can remember, it is as near to the truth as possible.

I hope it will be the means of helping many a boy to steer clear of the terrible drink habit, which caused me and others so much misery and sorrow. I also hope that God will bless this book as a message of salvation to some who are still suffering on account of drink.

Yours sincerely,

"STEEPLE JIM,"

James A. Parker.

FOREWORD

Steeple Jim is the story of the life of James Alfred Parker, born in 1880 at Trout Cove, a small town on the Bay of Fundy in Nova Scotia. He was best known by the name of Steeple, or Steeple Jack, Jim, since his business at most times was the painting of steeples and flag poles. He has been called the Fighting Brute and the most notorious drunkard in America, appellations which he seems to have rightly deserved. He began and ended his career as a preacher. His only sermon after his conversion was an account of his own life, showing clearly the awful effects of drink and the power of Jesus to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God through Him. The book should be in the library of every W. C. T. U. and Sunday School in the land, and affords a fund of illustrations for ministers of the gospel. Its author is a graduate of Brown University, a student at Princeton Seminary, and a Baptist minister of great success as an evangelist, who has made every endeavor to confirm the veracity of the narrative.

ROBERT DICK WILSON

INTRODUCTION

THIS book is the biography of James Alfred Parker, better known as "Steeple Jim." It has been written after a long and scientific study into his life, to find out his character and the events of his life. This volume has been in preparation for over two years. Intensive study began in the last half-year of my college days, when I spent three afternoons a week in conference with "Steeple Jim." During that same period, I also attended one or more meetings a week at his mission, where I got familiar with the men Jim worked with and the services he conducted.

In the fall of 1927, I made a week's visit to the Brockton mission, where I further studied and wrote. I have written testimonies from various men of repute, affirming the honesty of "Steeple Jim"; also I have investigated most of the events contained in this book, and found them to be true. In some parts the order of events in the story may not be chronological, for it was at times hard for Jim to recall events which happened during his drunken days. Some things he remembered not from events themselves, but from what was later told him in court or at home. At all times, however, the author has shunned exaggeration, and has attempted to make the story true to the letter.

This is not the first story of "Steeple Jim's" life. One short account has been published in the *Christian Herald*; another was put out in pamphlet form by the Salvation Army, entitled *What Changed the Fighting Brute into a Decent Man*, and sold for twenty-five cents a copy. I have in my possession the original biography of "Steeple Jim" as written by his son Carleton, but which was not completed by the boy, due to his death in 1925. Also, newspapers have given much space to the life story of "Steeple Jim," which has been syndicated throughout the country. Mrs. Parker and I both possess a great many newspaper accounts, which will bear record of many statements contained in this book. I also have in my possession the "Original Manuscript Scenario of *The Man from the Gutter*, by Potter Dean," who spent much time in preparing a thirty-three page document for the motion pictures, but who, for some reason or other, did not carry out his intention of getting Jim's life story into the motion pictures. I have talked numerous times with "Hattie" — Jim's wife, "Gertie" — Jim's sister, "Ida" — Mrs. Parker's sister, Mrs. Parker's mother and father, and other relatives and acquaintances of the family. I have in my possession letters and documents which have convinced me that the contents of this biography are true.

This book does not contain all the things that Jim has said and done. Obnoxious passages and many profane conversations have been omitted; incidents have been purposely left out, and sometimes just the

"high spots" have been touched upon. Perhaps the many adventures during Jim's drunken days may seem monotonous to adults. But they have been recorded more for the young people, who seek action on every page, than for the thrill-sickened older folk.

The purpose of publishing this book is to win neither wealth nor fame for anyone, but to show the world that by the experience of one who was called the most notorious drunkard America has ever known, that selfishness and defiance to God are a curse; but that unselfishness and acceptance of Jesus Christ the Saviour will bring happiness and peace.

Let youth read and take counsel. Let old age read and rejoice.

W. W. W.

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY, 1929.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THANKS are due to George Heidt, who for some years was secretary of the Brown University Christian Association, and is now Business Manager of the Park Avenue Baptist Church, New York City. It was through the agency of Mr. Heidt that the author made an acquaintance with Steeple Jim.

Mr. John Dow, A. B., Harvard University, spent much time correcting the original manuscript of this book. We are grateful to him for his service.

Professor Robert Dick Wilson, (whose unequaled linguistic explorations, covering some forty-five languages and dialects), was indeed kind in writing such a complimentary foreword. His mighty defense of the Holy Bible and the historic Christian faith has put to flight hosts of the enemies of God. A commendation from the pen of such a scholar is greatly appreciated.

CHAPTER I

EARLY YEARS

Way down East, in that territory abounding in Blue Noses, snuggled between the Bay of Fundy on one side, with hills and mountains farther back on the other side, squatted the little fishing village of Trout Cove. On the hills behind sheep roamed, and ate the short grass they delighted in. Bears were not uncommon; while deer and moose ran at random and unmolested through the forests of Digby County. In front, the sea, making symphonies at times, and just plain melodies at others, swarmed with fishes, waiting to be caught and eaten by man, their master. The tides, noted for their height, sometimes swelled until they flooded the homes of the humble fisher folk.

Trout Cove, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, was inhabited by about five hundred souls, mostly Christians, and mostly fishermen. A few families did farming for an occupation, and most families had small garden patches, but about all of the men folk tried their luck at fishing — if luck it could be called.

The village supported one Union Church; and the preacher, usually an unmarried man, lived around at the homes of his kind parishioners — his flock. And indeed, so devout were these people, that if an inhabi-

tant became poor, or sick, kind neighbors would deliver at the home of the afflicted one: wood, meat, flour, and other commodities, until all the unfortunate's necessities had been supplied. It was a party for the townsfolk to get together, and then pounce in upon some unhappy fellow creature, with supplies for the winter and good cheer for all time. There was no poorhouse in the village; and the people rarely locked their doors. No one wanted to call a tramp a hobo — but rather a wayfarer. During storms, the villagers lighted tar barrels and timbers piled high on the shore; so that the mounting flames would serve as a beacon to storm-tossed vessels out on the bay. And if, in spite of all precautions, there happened to be a shipwreck on their shores, the rescued sailors always found open homes and kindly care from the village.

Two stores were boasted of by the villagers. One was the big General Store, where on winters' afternoons the "old timers" would gather around the stove, chew tobacco, play games, and tell stories, — where one could buy anything from a toothpick to a baby carriage. Cotton goods, groceries, and even vegetables in season could also be had for the price. The other store was a Variety Store and had the distinction of being the Post Office. Groceries, cigars, tobacco, odds and ends were also in stock. Bartering was common, and horse trading an art. Doctors, lawyers, stock brokers, and big business men were unknown in Trout Cove.

Yet the life of the people was anything but dreary,

despite the lack of the theatre or the great industrial system. The children had a chance to be educated in the village school, where they had to buy their own supplies, and attended classes as often as they wished. Before and after school the boys would hold tugs of war, play marbles, wrestle, or pitch horseshoes. And during cold weather what could be more healthy than sledding or skating?

Besides, under the auspices of the church, husking bees, sleighing parties and other socials were held. Not under the auspices of the church, old fashioned barn dances, mild in comparison with city hugging orgies (falsely called dancing), served to make light the hearts of the youths.

Trout Cove was a poor fishing village, yet it was rich in character and characters. Of these, none was better known than William Forster Parker, commonly called Captain Bill. Those who knew him said that never a more fearless man sailed the seas than Captain Parker — that, when he was sober. If perchance he got “liquored up,” no man dared lay hands on him, for liquor drove him mad. He was a big man — six feet and four inches tall and weighing nearly two hundred pounds. It was said of him that he could lift a timber alone, which required the strength of three ordinary men to raise. And many was the time that he took a three-hundred-fifty-pound sugar barrel upon his shoulders. He was rough and stern on board ship. He inspired awe and struck terror into the hearts of the crew — who scurried about at his orders like so many

galley slaves. And when a Parker-captained ship came home to rest, many times the crew would leave, vowing never to return. But always, when the same boat was again ready to sail, the same crew would be on deck to do the bidding of the giant Captain Bill. For although he was harsh at times, at other times he was kind-hearted and loving.

In his younger days his drinking caused him much trouble. At one time, while under the influence of liquor, a railroad train hit him and broke many of his ribs. Several of the short ribs were removed; but contrary to what others thought, most of the broken bones knitted, and Captain Bill got back his strength.

Luckily for him, a dear Christian girl conquered his life, and for twenty years after they were married, he, for her sake, did not touch a drop of alcoholics. But even without alcohol he was a terror when he wanted to be one. In the woods, while chopping trees one day, he gashed his instep with the ax. Although the blood flowed fast, Parker uttered no complaint. So bad was his hurt, that he had to go for days on crutches. There were several in town who were glad to see him down, and taking advantage of the accident, five cowards set about to molest him. A one-sided fight followed, for Captain Parker with super-strength put them all to flight. So great was his anger, that he went home without his crutches, the blood oozing from his foot.

After that incident his name spread abroad, and none who knew him disputed his authority. Only

those poor innocents who did not believe what they heard, or who had not heard, were foolish enough to try tussling with him.

As a sea captain, Parker visited most of the world's great ports — delivering general merchandise and doing the trading that his merchant-master would have him do. When he was not bound for China, Cuba, the West Indies, some other port, or home, then off he'd go a-mackerel-fishing in St. Mary's Bay.

At one time, on his way home from a voyage, he heard that one of his sons was dying. To make bad matters worse, every one of his crew had died from the cursed yellow fever. Yet alone he manned his twenty-ton ship through Digby Gut during a terrible storm!

At another time Captain Parker ran a packet-boat from Trout Cove to St. John. Morton, of Trout Cove, had a daughter who had married an American boy. He took it into his head to run another packet-boat, and to run Captain Parker out of business. Oh idle boast! It so happened that Captain Bill always had a place at the wharf reserved for him, where he was accustomed to tie up his ship. Up sailed the enterprising American and steered his ship right into Captain Parker's berth. And more than that, that arrogant one said he was unafraid! Captain Parker blew in some time later with his packet-boat. Of course, he was angry because someone had dared to take his place at the quay. Whereupon he tied his own ship to the newcomer's, found out what the American was up to, and then untied the usurper's

boat from its moorings, setting it adrift in the Bay of Fundy. Then, with coolness, he roped his own bark in its accustomed place, and stepped upon the quay with his crew. Up stormed the American boy on the run, with his crew behind.

"Who did that?" he demanded in a rage, pointing to the drifting ship.

"I did," said Captain Bill Parker, with zest.

Another one-sided battle ensued between the American, aided by his crew, and Parker, unaided. (Parker's crew stood by, ready to use a fist or two if the occasion arose.) Parker fought with hands and feet, tearing around, buffeting over his opponents like ninepins. In short, the sturdy captain had mastered the situation; the American and his men departed — beaten and broken. Later on the drifting ship was rescued; but it was never used as a packet-boat again.

Captain William was born in Pigtow, Nova Scotia. He chose wisely when he selected for his mate, Mary Jane Woodbury, born of Scotch and Irish ancestors at Calais, Maine.

Mary Woodbury's early life had been saddened by her father's death. He had been a plumber, and had gone to St. John, N. B., at the time of the cholera epidemic. The unfortunate man was stricken with the disease, fell into a trance, and was pronounced dead. They buried him without delay. A few weeks later, his casket — a crude wooden affair — was dug up and sent to the widow, Mrs. Woodbury. When the box was opened — to place the body in a

better casket for a better burial — what a sight greeted them! The poor man had been buried alive, and when he had awakened from the trance which had caused the mistake, he strove to free himself. In doing so he had scratched his face and pulled out his hair.

Mary Woodbury, later Mrs. William Parker, owed much to her mother, who some time after her husband's death married a Mr. Bent. She never had much trouble in making friends. She was an ideal housewife and mother. From the woods nearby she gathered spruce boughs and made them into brooms. From miles around she gathered divers herbs — rhubarb root and Indian tobacco — to store in her attic for medicines. She was deeply religious, and had convictions which carried her through life. She memorized long passages of the Bible, and could tell inquirers where any quotation was to be found.

Miss Mary Jane Woodbury became Mrs. William Forster Parker. She lived peaceably with her husband, who was not by nature a quarrelsome man. She lived peaceably with her neighbors. Her Christian character made itself manifest by her good deeds. At the birth of a child in the neighborhood, her attendance was sought; for although she was unlicensed, her knowledge of medicine was broad, and her services as a midwife were reliable. If two women were confined, and sought her services — the one with money, the other without — always she would choose to serve the one who needed her most.

She was a regular Christian worker, connected with the Adventist Church, and would go without things herself in order to do for others. She was naturally cheerful, and was continually singing. She made up poetry, and repeated good poems composed by others. She loved to tell her children stories, among which were all the tales of Robin Hood.

Mr. William Parker and his wife settled down in a small house in Trout Cove. Their home had been built upon a ledge next to the ocean. The house had three rooms down-stairs, ornamented with red wall paper, and warmed by a great open fireplace, which was also used for cooking. Fresh water was a quarter of a mile away, since there were no pumps or faucets in the house. It took a half a mile's journey to fetch water to the house.

She was a little woman — Mrs. Parker — and weighed only about 104 pounds. There were born of her, fourteen children; yet by her sacrifice her natural force was not abated, nor was her life shortened. Of those fourteen little ones, six lived beyond childhood; and of those six, one made himself infamous — and yet famous. When he was born, on the fifteenth day of December, in 1880, his mother and father chose to call him James Alfred; but it was not long before people began to call him little Jimmy or just plain Jim. Jim was the ninth child of the Parker family. John was older than Jim by two years, and those two brothers found in each other a genuine comradeship. When Jim was four years old, his brother Hallet was

born. Jim remembered that event quite well, because the boy weighed only fifteen ounces at birth. Captain Parker wrapped the little fellow up in a towel, and put him in a cradle. John asked the doctor, who had been summoned from a nearby town, where he got the cute little baby. The doctor replied that he got him over in Morton's stump yard (a plot where old tree-stumps were quite plentiful). John, who stuttered, told his chum, Leslie Titus, another six-year-old boy, what the doctor had said. They hastened with an ax to the stump yard, and hacked away as long as strength would allow them. But the crop of babies had not come up, and their searching was in vain. Disappointed and tired, they returned to their homes.

"D'd'doctor I'l'lied!" John indignantly stuttered when he reached home. "B'b'been out all day; all we can find is flying pismires!"

During the day, before Jim was old enough to go to school, he wandered about the countryside, meeting with adventures and making discoveries. He and Leslie Titus were the best of friends, and shared each other's experiences. After finding many pismires over in Morton's stump yard, both boys conspired together to eat some of the creatures. They had seen Captain Parker eat those red ants with molasses; and they were said to have a real fine taste. But Captain Parker's pismires had been frozen; the boys did not think to take that into account. Jim, the chief conspirator, got Leslie to ask Mrs. Parker for a spoonful

of molasses. Leslie was given it. Then the boys captured a host of pismires, and filled the spoon with them. Without ceremony, Jim ate one half and Leslie the other. Then the fun began, for most of the ants lodged in the throats of the boys and commenced to bite. A chorus of cries and screams arose; Mother Parker came rushing to the scene, and pulled many of the insects from the boys' throats, which naturally swelled to large dimensions. Later on, Leslie gave Jim a trouncing for causing him so much pain, for Jim had been the instigator of the whole affair.

When Captain Parker ran a packet-boat, he had to go from house to house taking orders. Little Jim, too, went from house to house taking orders for his own amusement. Tut Graham, a man about town, thought he'd have some fun with little Jim. For when the youngster came to the door for an order, Tut said, "I want a barrel of flour and a box of tobacco; and if you don't have them here in a hurry, I'll call the constable and have you put in jail at Digby!"

Jim shook with terror. He cried as he hurried home, for he believed that Tut was telling the truth. Luckily, he met his big brother John, who consoled him, and told him that the order could easily be filled. At John's suggestion they borrowed an empty flour barrel from their mother, filled it full of snow, and then headed it up. Next, they filled a small box with hemlock bark (somewhat similar to tobacco, and just as sensible to smoke), covered the box, and started to

deliver their order. The barrel was easy to roll, and the "Tobacco Box" was not heavy. Now it so happened that Mrs. Tut Graham had actually ordered a barrel of flour some time before from Captain Parker; and his packet-boat was almost due. Therefore, when she met the two boys at her back door, where they told her that their father's ship had arrived early, she innocently believed them. So they rolled the barrel into the pantry and left in a hurry. A short time after, Mrs. Graham came into a pantry flooded with water. She called her husband. In one glance Tut took in the trouble, opened the barrel and saw it half full of snow and water. Forever after, Tut could always get a laugh out of the men who hung out at the General Store, when he told the story of how the Parker boys filled his order.

Once Jim very narrowly escaped with his life. He had gone down to the quay to visit his father's ship, but when he stepped on the plank between the wharf and ship, the heavy seas tossed him into the water. He had gone under twice (and a third time would perhaps have meant his death) when in jumped George Holmes, and rescued him.

When the diphtheria epidemic reached Trout Cove, many caught the disease. The Parkers got it from their cats — one, a big maltese Tom, the other a kitten. One day Jim found the Tom cat sick at the foot of a cliff. He brought him home. The next day the kitten dropped dead, and Captain Parker decided to kill the old cat.

When he had done so, he scared the children by saying, "Guess that's what I'll do to the kids — to get them out of the way."

At first the children took him seriously, but after a while they saw that their father was only joking. Jim caught the malady from the old cat, and from Jim it spread to Gertie, John, and Annie. The disease was called "Black Diphtheria"; and Captain Parker treated his children by painting their throats with sulphur. He purchased ten quills for this purpose. During the long siege of illness, friends and neighbors helped the stricken ones. Jenny Tibido, a friend of Jim's, came in to read stories to him. She caught the disease from him, and her brother and sister caught it from her. Both died. Jenny lived. However, none of the Parker children died from that disease.

It was rather lonesome in the Parker household when the father was out to sea. There was always the dangers of storms, of sickness, of hunger. Yet Mother Parker cheerfully bore her burdens, and well cared for the children: Gertrude, Annie, William, and John — all older than Jim; and Hallet, younger than Jim. Those were the six of the fourteen which lived beyond early childhood. The mother would gather her brood around the fireplace and teach them to be kind, gentle, and true. Tramps were not "hoboes" but gentlemen, she would tell them. And during one winter's storm, six of those unfortunates slept out in the back room, and ate of the Parker fare. She would read stories from the *New York Weekly* to her young, and they

especially liked to hear about "Kaelus the Terrible." Then a little later she would take the family Bible and read a chapter from it: of Abraham, perhaps, or Isaac and Jacob; or Joseph, sold into slavery by his brethren, yet later made ruler of all Egypt; of Moses, the leader of his people, who gave the law from God; of David the shepherd King; of Solomon, the wisest man of all time, who, after enjoying great riches, power, and pleasure, concluded, "All is Vanity." She read about the prophets, who told of a great King who should be born of a virgin in little Bethlehem — who should heal the sick, cause the blind to see, raise the dead, and then die for the sins of the whole world. Those little ones were especially interested in the life of Jesus, and listened with eager hearts to the words and deeds of their Saviour, who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mother Parker could hardly restrain her emotion, as she told how that same lover of little children, had been condemned, and was crucified on a cross, shedding his precious blood for all the world. Joy would come into her face, however, when she read of the resurrection of the Lord. She urged her little ones to remain steadfast and true to their best friend, Jesus. At the conclusion of the Bible story, the children would all kneel beside their beds, say the Lord's prayer, then prayers of their own hearts, and finally go to bed — leaving mother to her own thoughts and her own prayers.

CHAPTER II

SCHOOL DAYS

Jim inherited his mother's good nature and sense of humor. He was also endowed with his father's strength and will power. The Irish, Scotch, and English blood which flowed through his veins seemed to combine the outstanding qualities of those three races. He seemed to revel in humor and practical jokes. Whenever he could create a laugh among his friends he did so, which developed in him the tendency to "show off." Nobody knew to what extremes he might have gone had it not been for his mother's religious teachings in the home. For although Jim sometimes forgot for the moment the dictates of his mother, yet many times those religious truths, those prayers of his mother, would come to his mind in spite of himself.

When Jim reached the age of six, he was sent to the village school. The building had recently been built; and the old one, a flimsy structure, was used to hold town meetings in, or for some special show. Jim, hand in hand with his older brother John, proceeded to the school. Mr. Parsons was the teacher, and boarded around with the different families who sent their children to his school. The benches stretched

in rows across the room; and the children sat side by side.

From the very first Jim did not buckle down to business. He was too full of life, too active to learn such things as multiplication tables and spelling. Who cared what two times two or six times six equalled? Jim didn't care a pin.

John, usually a quiet and obedient boy, got into a "mess" one day at school. He found an old revolver — one which could not shoot — and put it in his pocket. It was in the morning before school, and the boys and girls were talking and laughing together in the room. Mr. Parsons, unfortunately, had not arrived. John entered and closed the door. When he reached the front of the room he pulled out the revolver and pointed it at the other boys and girls. There was a mad rush for the door, and in the stampede that followed a panel in the door was broken.

John became frightened and hid his weapon. When Mr. Parsons arrived, the girls ran up to him and cried: "John was going to shoot us with a revolver!"

The teacher saw the damage done at the door and demanded the pistol of John, who said he didn't have one. John persisted in his falsehood. At length school commenced and proceeded quietly. At meal time Mr. Parsons met Captain Parker, told him the story, and asked him to send over a carpenter to fix the door. Captain Parker complied with the request. When he returned to his home, John again denied that

he had possessed a revolver. Whereupon Captain Parker took out his cowhide belt and whaled the youngster. That was the only time that John ever got a lacing.

Not long after that incident word got around that Mr. Spinney was coming to town. Mr. Spinney was a showman; and for ten cents one could hear him mimic animals, see Punch and Judy shows, wonder at the best card tricks, and even watch rabbits come out of people's hats. And then the Magic Lantern shows were the very best. But many boys and girls could not get the price to see and hear that fun. Since the show was in the evening, a large delegation of older folks, as well as younger ones, were present. But the lucky boy or boys, who helped Spinney clean out the old schoolhouse, mop the floor, and dust the wood-work, could get into the show free. John wanted to go to the show. Jim wanted to go to the show. Mother could not spare the money; and school lasted through the day when they could help Spinney. Now it so happened that Jim had a method of making himself sick — that of putting his finger down his throat, and throwing up his food. John conspired with Jim. Jim was to "throw up" in school, and John was to ask to take him home. That would let both of them out of school. Then both could help Spinney, and both could see the show that night. Simple? Ah yes. About two o'clock that afternoon, Jim gave up his dinner. Immediately John sputtered and stuttered:

"M'M'M'Mr. P'P'Parsons!"

what had happened. And, after their half-mile uphill journey, what did they see? Only a stuffed pair of pants blowing in the breeze! Jim and Bill laid low for the rest of that day. When they went home for supper that night, and before they got any food, they got a whaling from their dad.

That same George Morehouse, who hung himself — but who did not hang himself — had a nephew, also by the name of George Morehouse. This George loved birds, and one time caught a crow when it was young, and tamed it. Now and then the bird would go over to visit Jake Daken's corn field, to satisfy his curiosity and his hunger. Jake, who was an old bachelor, didn't like that at all. He knew whose crow it was, and that it was tame. Yet in cold blood he shot the crow, tied it to a pole, and hung it in his garden as a challenge to George Morehouse, and a warning to other blackbirds which might wander that way. Although Jake was the "grouch" of the town, and was known to be quite small in his money matters, yet Mrs. Parker pitied the solitary man, and was accustomed to send him over food now and then. One day Mother Parker sent Bill with a warm mince pie, to warm the stomach and heart of old Jake Daken. But Bill, on his way to Jake's house, stopped in to see George Morehouse. And the two conspired together. They both agreed that Jake needed to be taught a lesson. He had even worked his poor nephew to death by making him do the heavy work on the farm. Jake should be punished. So off sneaked Bill, snatched the dead crow

from the pole, came back to George's house, where they cut what was left of his body up into small portions. Then they carefully extracted the center of the pie, and put the crow in its place; and after covering it with pie-crust, Bill took the choice pastry to Jake's house. Jake saw the dead crow, but he did not see the joke of it, although everybody else did for some time after. Nevertheless, Jake never killed another tame crow.

The Parker boys, according to the custom of the time, also had tame crows. Most famous of all were Tim and Betty, two which Bill caught. Those two birds had been domesticated, and their wings had been clipped while Captain Parker was off on one of his ocean voyages. One day, after he had come home, greeted his family, and laid himself down for a nap, he was awakened from his slumbers by Betty. Neither had seen the other, and Betty set up a terrible cawing at Captain Parker. Not knowing that Betty was a tame crow, and a friend of the family's, Captain Parker vigorously tried to shoo her out of the room. But to no avail. Then he picked up one of his shoes (which was lying beside his bed) and hurled it at poor Betty, who was unable to fly very high because of her clipped wings. The shoe hit its mark, and Betty was killed outright by the blow. When Captain Parker found out that he had killed a family pet, it nearly broke his big heart. Tenderly Betty was laid to rest in a grave in the yard. But Tim scratched away the soil over her body, and dug her up

from the grave. Again Betty was buried, deeper than before. Again Tim dug her body up. Father Parker sought some other means of ridding himself of Betty, so he threw her over the cliff. The body caught on the bough of a tree, far below. Tim, the mate, stayed around that tree for months after, coming home for just enough food to keep him alive. Poor Tim! His devotion was greater than that of most mortals.

Jim loved the birds and animals. After he had learned that it was not impossible to play hooky from school, and get away with it, he spent many days wandering alone along the shores, or in the woods. He climbed the tall spruce trees, and stole their gum, which he sold to the sailors for two to four cents a pound. Spruce gum was plentiful, especially on the knots of the spruce. He gathered dulse from the shores, and sold that, too. Anything to get away from school — anything to escape the humdrum monotony of the class-room. Finally Jim resolved never to go to school again. For five weeks he did that without his parents knowing. Then, one day, Captain Parker met Mr. Parsons on the street and inquired:

“How are the boys making out at school?”

“Fine. John’s making out all right, but Jim hasn’t been to school for five weeks,” replied the teacher.

Captain Parker was surprised, and resolved to whip Jim for playing truant, and John for not telling at home. But that evening his heart softened, because he had planned to move to Weymouth soon and there Jim could start in all over again.

With only a total of about six weeks' schooling to his credit, Jim, then nearly seven years old, moved with his family to Weymouth, on St. Mary's Bay. That town was made up mostly of lumberjacks and fishermen. The Parkers moved into a house near the sea; so near the sea, in fact, that one day at the coming in of the tide the family realized they would be flooded. The question was debated whether they should leave the house or not. Mother Parker's opinion prevailed.

"The house is well built, and will stand," she said. When the water came into the lower floor, the family went upstairs. The tide rose and rose until it reached the half-way mark on the first floor. Then the waters subsided, leaving pots, pans, chairs and other household goods upside down and topsy-turvy on the floor.

In Weymouth Jim did go to school for about two weeks. But he grew ill, and stayed out the rest of the time. When he was better again he chose to follow his own merry life in the woods and by the seaside, rather than in the schoolroom.

About a year after Captain Parker and his family moved to Weymouth, word came from the captain's mother, Mrs. Videto, that she was sick. She invited her son to come to Bear River and take possession of her home, a new house, almost completed. Without ado, Captain Parker and family put together their few belongings and moved to their new home at Bear River. There they settled, and whenever a dollar or so extra came into the family purse, a window or a door was purchased for the house. Jim was stubborn

and would not go to school. So his father, thinking that he could break the boy's will, put him to work in a shingle mill. At the age of seven, the youngster toiled ten hours a day — from seven in the morning until six at night (with an hour for dinner) — six days of the week. For pay he received from \$1.50 to \$2.00 a week, which was made out in a check to the General Store. The shingle mill was run by water power, and the mill could run only when the pond was full. The mill was quite small and employed but a few hands: Mr. Bockman, Mr. Thomas, his son Archie Thomas, John Parker, Jim Parker, and Peter Wheeler, who was afterwards hung at Digby for the murder of a girl, Annie Kempton.

Jim's only time off, as a general rule, was holidays and Sundays. But Sundays the family always went to the little Adventist Church, and the Sabbath was well kept in the Parker home. A few times the mill would shut down — but those cases were rare. One holiday, Saint Ann's, was indeed a time of revelling for the boys. It was somewhat similar to May Day, or Hallowe'en, to the children of the United States. The boys would play all sorts of pranks; Jim and Bill were into the worst kinds of mischief. They took the shoemaker's sign down and put it on the Church (to be true, where "souls" were made). They took the fisherman's sign and put it at the shoemaker's. One time, in the dead of night, they pulled a crabbed farmer's buggy to pieces, and put it together again on top of his barn. They would stretch a rope from tree

to tree across the lawn of some grouch and tie it about a foot from the ground. Then, summoning the crank to the door they would egg him on to chase them. Then he would fall suddenly down upon his own lawn — foiled and fooled. Jim and Bill, his older brother, were the worst “cut-ups” in the town. There was no question about that. John was quiet and rather gentlemanly; but Jim and Bill got such reputations that the townspeople called them “Parker’s Devils.” Anything that went wrong, no matter what it was, was laid to “Parker’s Devils.” If Captain Parker heard of anything amiss about town, he spanked Jim and Bill, and found out afterwards if they were the guilty ones.

Saint Ann’s Day, too, had a charitable side. It was the custom among the boys to gather vegetables from the gardens of the more prosperous citizens, and take them into the homes of the poor. Some wise farmers tried to guard their gardens with shotguns, but a crowd of youngsters would gather about him and engage him in a conversation. Then, when he was off his guard, other boys would steal into the garden, steal, then steal out again.

In the evenings after work, and on days when the shingle factory closed, Jim acquainted himself with all the boys of the town. Wrestling matches and fights were common. They were the boys’ method of finding out who was who. One had to be a fighter to be a social success.

Trout fishing was quite popular at all seasons, for

only during the bitter cold spells were the rapids frozen, so that fishing became impossible. Walking through the woods, the boys tied knots in branches of the fir trees. In ten years they would make wonderful material for Indian war clubs and the like.

In the winter time sledding was the chief sport. There was one course which was nearly a mile long, and there the boys spent many happy hours. In the evenings after supper Jim found sport in sliding down that famous hill.

In the summer there was bathing in the "ol' swimmin' hole." Although Jim was an excellent fighter and wrestler, he never learned to swim. His brother Bill, though, could swim; and both, on a summer's afternoon or evening, would go with the gang to their retreat, and there enjoy the cool waters. One time on the way to the pool Bill spied a hornets' nest. A friend of his, who had asthma, wanted one to smoke as a treatment for his malady. Bill stole it and carried it with him to the swimming hole. He then undressed, and covered his prize with his clothes. After bathing for some time with Jim, he returned to the bank to get dressed. What a reception committee greeted them! The hornets stung their naked bodies as they skampered back to the water, where they remained for a long time.

Not far from Captain Parker's house was an Indian reservation, set aside by the English government. The Indian land was adjacent to a swift running stream, terminating in rapids and finally the sea. On

the banks of the river against the trees were hung the Indian canoes. Jim knew that. Bill knew it, too. They conspired together. One holiday they walked to the reservation, and proceeded to the stream. Sure enough, there was a canoe; and sure enough, Jim could lift it right off its peg on the tree. Sure enough, Jim could put it in the water, which he did. Sure enough, Jim could get into it, and sure enough — what did Bill do but push him right out into the stream. The waters were rushing out at a fast rate. There was Jim, tearing along in the canoe, screaming for help, knowing that at the rapids he would surely die, if some one did not rescue him. Alec, an Indian, heard the boys' screams, and ran at top speed after the canoe. A half mile down the stream Alec waded out and rescued Jim, just as the bark was about to enter the rapids. That was the second time Jim narrowly escaped death by drowning. Yet as surely as the sun rose in the East, if Alec had not been born, Jim would have been drowned that day.

Jim took his first smoke when he was nine years old. Mr. Thomas, in the shingle factory, smoked long Cuban cigars. He had just lighted up one morning, when a customer entered and wished to buy some barrel staves. He laid the cigar down and proceeded to wait on the customer. Jim, who was near Mr. Thomas at the time, saw his opportunity, picked up the cigar, and puffed away at it like a steam engine. When Mr. Thomas came back, his cigar was used up, and the room was full of smoke.

That afternoon Mr. Thomas told Captain Parker what had happened. Now Captain Parker did not want Jim to smoke, or any of his children, for that matter. He himself smoked, but inwardly he regarded it as an expensive, dirty habit. He resolved to cure Jim once and for all. From the mantel piece he took an old long-stemmed pipe. Years before it had grown too strong for his own use. He trimmed down the bowl with his knife, and filled it with chips from his plug of "Napoleon Tobacco," an exceedingly strong variety. When Jim came home that evening, Captain Parker was the first to speak.

"I understand, Jimmy, that you had a good smoke to-day."

"Yes sir," replied Jim vigorously.

"Did it taste good?"

"Sure," affirmed Jim.

"Well here," said Captain Parker, stretching forth to Jim the pipe full of "Napoleon Tobacco." "This will be a better one. You smoke every bit of this, young man, or I'll give you a good trouncing. I'll learn you for stealing again when a man lays his cigar down!"

Jim sat down in a chair, lit the pipe and puffed at it. He looked this way and that at the family, who stood in a circle watching him. He didn't seem to care a bit, and enjoyed to the utmost his task. Smoke it? Of course, he did, to the very last puff. When the tobacco was all consumed, without a moment's hesitation he held it up to his bewildered father and said:

"That's fine, pop! Fill it up again!"

Pop did not fill up that pipe again; but his cup of wrath he did fill, and spilt it on poor Jim. For Jim then and there got next to the worst trouncing of his life. And then and there, during his beating, for the first time laughed at his father. The pain could not hurt him, and his laughing only made the father hit him more. Neither the pipe nor the chastising cured Jim of smoking, for soon afterwards he bought a T.D. pipe, a plug of "Napoleon Tobacco," and smoked secretly.

Some time after Jim's first smoking experience, he was visiting the home of a neighbor. The lady of the house sent Jim, who was quick at doing chores, down cellar for an armful of wood. Jim noticed a cider barrel near the wood pile, and went over to taste it. It seemed like sweet cider, so he drank a glass. Then he took another, and another, until he had consumed seven glasses. When he was returning home that afternoon he fell over unconscious. Friends carried him to his house and a doctor was summoned. After analyzing the situation, the doctor used a stomach pump and removed the poisons from Jim's system. The drink happened to be some artificial concoction, an imitation of cider. But the directions had warned not to use the dregs, because they were poisonous. It was the dregs which had intoxicated Jim.

When the Parkers had moved to Weymouth, they had taken Tim, the tame crow, with them. Tim had also accompanied his human friends to Bear River,

where he continually amused the children of the neighborhood. Tim loved shiny objects. And many a housewife in the neighborhood would miss a thimble, or safety pin, and realize only too late that Tim had gone through the open window and departed with the booty. It was a mystery for a long time where Tim hid his treasures, until Bill Parker saw him make a deposit in a hollow of the old tree in front of the Parker home. Up climbed Bill, and much to the chagrin of poor Tim, brought forth from the treasures not only a hoard of safety pins and thimbles, but silver teaspoons as well. The articles were returned to their owners — even to Jim's aunt, who lived at some distance away from the hollow tree. Thief Tim was a mad, scolding crow for weeks after.

Tim was a fighter — afraid of nothing, not even birds larger than himself. And one day he fought with a full grown rooster. That rooster was a weighty bird, much heavier than his opponent, and also possessed a full set of wing feathers and a pair of sharp spurs. Poor Tim's wing feathers were clipped, and he had no spurs. Yet bravely he fought, until the rooster gashed Tim's neck with one of his spurs. Hastily Tim retreated to a nearby brook to quench his thirst; it was there that Jim found him, alive but stretched out prostrate on the ground, with beak open. Jim tenderly picked him up and hastily took him home. But when he arrived, Tim was dead. The boys moaned and sobbed; mother Parker wept. The body lay in state for some time. When the boys had sum-

moned up enough courage, he was buried in the yard. That was the end of poor Tim.

The Parkers had lived in their new house about five years. Although Captain Parker had been shipping many seasons, he had not gathered enough money to entirely finish his building. In the attic of his frame house the smaller children played during the day. They cut out paper dolls and pictures, and, not knowing they were doing harm, left them around the chimney pipe. One winter's evening the pipe got overheated, and at midnight the house was ablaze. The children left in bare feet, and the grown-ups were but scantily attired. They lost everything. They tried to save a table that was loaded with dishes, but when they got it as far as the door, the plates all slipped off and smashed. Bill did rush in through the flames and rescue a big jar of blueberry pickles (made by allowing blueberries to ferment in salt, molasses, and water) from under his mother's bed. But that was all. The money that Captain Parker had saved to have a chimney built, burned with the house.

The Parkers were destitute. Kind neighbors took care of them until the broken-hearted father could gather enough money together to transport the family to Whitman, Massachusetts, in the United States of America. Mrs. Parker's brother, Milidge Woodbury, lived there, and thought that Captain Parker could surely get work in one of the nearby mills or factories. Besides, Mrs. Parker did not want her husband to go to sea any more. It was too lonesome with him gone,

and the children needed his care at home. With the furniture that their Christian neighbors had given them at Bear River, the Parkers lived for two months at Northville (or East Bridgewater), where Mr. Parker secured work in a saw mill. Jim went to school, for all children were compelled by law to go to school until they were fourteen years old. And so, after five hard years in a shingle factory, Jim resumed his school days. In a way he was glad to get back to studying. And for those two months in Northville he acted like a gentleman.

Then, in February, 1892, the family moved to a house on Beulah Street in Whitman. There, compelled by law, twelve-year-old Jimmy went to school once more. He was made to start at the bottom of the ladder, and begin at the first grade. Jim had not been there many days before he began his "shenana-gins." At last his teacher lost her patience and, one day, sent him up to the principal, a woman by the name of Miss Deborah Partridge. In her office she whipped Jim with a ruler, and made his hands smart. That roused Jim's Irish, Scotch, and English temper. That afternoon he procured a bottle of "Le Page's Glue." Next morning, long before school started, Jim went to Deborah Partridge's room and poured the glue all over her chair. School began. The children took their seats. Deborah Partridge took her seat. That particular morning she was dressed in satin, a costly garment. The children found that an easy detail to remember, for when she arose to lead in the singing of

America, the chair came up with her. Although the glue had almost hardened when she sat down, it was sticky enough to hold the chair to the poor woman's skirt. When the chair fell, with it went poor Miss Deborah Partridge's satin skirt, rent and torn. The class burst into rounds of laughter. The teacher left the room in disgust, and hastily sent one of the boys to the livery stable for a cab. She went home the maddest teacher in six counties. Her class was dismissed for the rest of the day, the happiest children in the same six counties; and when the story spread over Whitman, it caused even more laughter.

The next day Miss Deborah Partridge offered \$50 reward to the person who would tell her who had committed the crime of the day before. No one would tell, for no one could tell. Jim was located in another room of the building, the first grade; and nobody suspected a first-grader. Surely he wouldn't confess; ah, no! not even for \$50.

When the Parkers moved to Gurney Place, Jim transferred to the School Street School. His teacher's name was Miss Nellie Callamore. He kindled her anger against him by putting bullfrogs and green adders in her chair, and crickets and grasshoppers in her desk. He even came to school, one day, with his hair curled, and when questioned as to the reason for doing so, replied, "I think I look better with curled hair."

In disgust the teacher sent him home. Of course, Jim didn't mind that at all. The next morning, Jim coaxed his sister Gertie to curl his hair again. Again

Gertie complied with his request, and again Jim was not permitted to stay at school. He did not go directly home, however, but wandered about town until supper time. The third morning, however, when Jim appeared at school with more curls, more smiles, the teacher marched him to an adjoining room and washed them all away. He had to stay at school all day.

One morning the teacher made an announcement: "Now, children, I've got to write these report cards for the superintendent. How many of you are going to be quiet?"

Up went Jim's hand among the first hands to be raised. And he was sincere about his promise. For a spell all went well. Then little Gertie Hill, a red-headed mischievous miss, somewhat of a tattle-tale (as most small children were apt to be), turned around from her seat in front of Jim's and deliberately made a face at him. Jim had been chewing on a cud of gum, but as soon as he was aroused by such a face from Gertie Hill, he wound paper around his gum and prepared to throw it at his tormentor. Gertie turned just then, saw in time what was being done, and dodged the ball. It flew swift and true, and hit the teacher plump on the nose. She jumped, spilled her bottle of ink on the reports, and cried:

"Who did that?"

"Jim Parker," said Gertie in a hurry. "He threw it at me, and I dodged it."

Miss Callamore very hastily wrote a note to the principal, gave it to Jim, and ordered him to the office.

Jim got as far as the cloak room, read the note, hurriedly grabbed his hat and coat, and then left for home. In spite of the law, that was the last day of Jim's lower school career. For thereupon he entered the College of Hard Knocks.

Once Mr. Parker saw that Jim could not be compelled by the law or by parents to go to school, he set him to work in a shoe factory. So Jim again put in ten hours a day, six days out of the week — this time not in a shingle mill, but the famous Commonwealth Shoe Factory. There he stamped the numbers on the linings of the shoes. His wages for the first two months were 25c a day; but he was a quick worker, and his pay was soon doubled to 50c a day. Captain Parker himself worked at the same factory for \$15 a week. All his children, except Jim and Bill, went to the public schools.

One day some steeple jacks came to paint the factory chimney. One of their men, who was supposed to swing in the boatswain's chair "backed out." Now the boatswain's chair, pronounced by sailors "bo's'n chair," was one used on the riggings, cables, and cordages of ships, by which one was suspended, in a comfortable sitting position in mid-air, by a heavy rope, fastened above. Seamen, who had used such a chair on board ship, became accustomed to high positions. When they became landlubbers, they found themselves at home in the "bo's'n chair" just as much on church spires, flag poles, and factory chimneys, as they did high up in the rigging of ships.

Now Bill, Jim's big brother, was perfectly at home in a bo's'n chair. And when he heard that Mr. Hines, the boss steeple jack of the gang, had trouble in getting some one to paint the tall smokestack, he came to him, told of his previous experience in a bo's'n chair in Nova Scotia, and got the job. Bill took such a liking to the work, that he made it, with shipping and fishing later on, his life work.

Jim's work occupied him six days of the week. On Sundays, Mrs. Parker tried to get all her brood off to church. She had not succeeded in doing that while her family had lived in Northville, for Jim abstained from church attendance entirely during those two months. But in Whitman, Jim became interested in the Bethany Free Baptist Church. It was a new organization in town, and Jim was the first one to be baptized in their new edifice. He seemed to take a liking to the church and church work. The brethren seemed to take a liking to Jim. Mr. Obid Ellis, a prominent clothier in town, gave Jim a new suit to wear to Sunday School, at which Jim was faithful in attendance.

He had not been a member of the church long before he grew interested in temperance. So interested, in fact, that he began an open war on booze. Older folks sat up and took notice, for the boy seemed to be sincere, and had a convincing manner about his speech. They gave their prodigy all the encouragement they could. He spoke at a gathering in the old schoolhouse at Northville, which was attended by

many men and women, mostly women. Jim easily held the attention of all by his earnest talk, which he illustrated with blackboard diagrams. He drew beer bottles, with hissing serpents coming out of them — which amused the people and made them try to imagine what great things were ahead of the youth. Soon he was known about town as “The Boy Preacher”; and an Adventist evangelist, Mr. Lyons, invited Jim to speak at a tent meeting in South Hanson. Jim did. There were about a thousand at that meeting, and scores were turned away. All the townsfolk became interested in Jim. One minister wanted to send him, later on, to Moody Bible Institute, in Chicago, where he could get an excellent training for the ministry. Everybody liked Jim. He was so bold, so unashamed. Whether at church or in the factory, he let people know what he thought.

One day his proud mother bought him a white shirt. It was the first one he ever had. Like all worldly creatures, Jim wanted to show it off. So the next day he wore it to the factory. That very day the boss changed him from his job of numbering shoes, to taking rough heels, scouring them, scraping them, and finally blacking them. Feeling in high spirits for that promotion, white-shirted Jim set about his new task with vigor; ah yes, too much vigor. For soon that white shirt of his, and his face as well, were all covered with black spots. To make bad matters worse, the boss came around and asked Jim how he had become black. Jim told him. The boss left. The rest

of the help in the factory room started laughing. But none laughed harder than Harrigan, whose roars of glee quickly kindled Jim's anger. Hastily he took the pot of blacking nearby, and dashed it into Harrigan's face. Well, that made Harrigan mad, and he started to chase Jim all about the room. Work was suspended by the others to see the chase. When Harrigan got too close, Jim would dump over a rack of shoes, and then keep going. More than once Harrigan tripped and sprawled headlong on the floor. Finally, when Jim realized that the damage he was doing was great, he fled through the door to the street and went home. That night, Jim Parker got another trouncing from his father.

Jim never went back to the Commonwealth Shoe Factory to get his pay, for he might have found out that he owed them something. His next job was in a nail factory, where he labored ten hours a day. He was paid for the amount of work he did; and, being a lively worker, he brought in about four dollars a week. For a time matters ran smoothly, Jim behaved like a gentleman, and could go to church every Sunday with a free conscience.

At the factory he spoke to all the help on temperance. There were two men, drunks about town, who would not be reformed. They had heard Jim speak at a camp meeting; they had heard him harangue in the nail factory. But "Art" and "Mink" despised the young Parker. They had their supply of alcoholics brought down from Boston by express every

Saturday afternoon, so that they could indulge over the week-end. The people of Whitman had voted not to allow the sale of intoxicating liquors in their township. Therefore, those who would drink had to get their supply from some other city or town. "Art" and "Mink" conspired together. One Saturday afternoon, they committed an atrocious crime, thinking it would be a great joke. That afternoon, among the liquors that had arrived in Whitman, was a quart of John Lyons Whiskey for "Mink" and "Art." After the rest of the help had gone home, and Jim was cleaning up around the shop, "Mink" tripped the boy, and held him down. "Art" pinched his nose and poured a quantity of that cursed John Lyons Whiskey into Jim's mouth. He had to swallow the stuff or choke. Jim swallowed it. The liquor burned his throat at first. But when he had been released by his captors, he felt a tingling sensation through his whole body. It seemed as though a fire of desire consumed him, a craving, such as he had never known before. The thirteen-year-old boy-preacher then and there felt, it seemed, a thousand devils roaring within him. He begged the men for another drink. They refused, and expressed their sorrow at giving him a first taste. Jim begged all the harder — but to no avail. He went about his work, but from the corner of his eye watched the men hide their bottle under a bench in an old box. And when their backs were turned, Jim stole the bottle.

As quickly as he could, he got his hat and started

home. He drank some of the whiskey. Soon the whole bottle had been consumed. Jim staggered up Washington Street, and fell dead drunk on the lawn of a retired minister's house.

Now if that minister had played the part of a good Samaritan, and had taken into his home and sobered up that thirteen-year-old fellow-creature of his, who had been robbed of his senses by bottled spirits, the events which followed might have been different. But no; the minister thought that the hand of the law was more powerful than the hand of the Lord; so he called the police. A new man, Officer Rand, had been appointed policeman, and it was not only his first day on duty, but also his first chance to show his authority. With great gusto he made his first arrest, and took the boy to the police station. Across from the station the first merry-go-round that Whitman had ever seen, had attracted about six hundred patrons. These all saw their famous boy-preacher and temperance lecturer dragged into the lock-up — drunk. Drunk? Yes, drunk. One of the boys in the crowd went down to the shoe shop and told Mr. Parker, who, in a fit of rage and dismay, hurried to the police station. He came hustling to the cell with Chief of Police Patrick Smith and Officer William Churchill. After one look at his son, he said decidedly, "Home is the place for the boy!"

But Chief Smith did not consent to have the boy taken home. Then it was that tall, broad-shouldered, iron-muscled Bill Parker locked the outside door of

the police station and said in a loud clear voice, "If you don't let that boy out, I'll beat you all up!" The Chief knew that only a shot from his pistol would stop Bill Parker from carrying out his threat, so he opened the cell. Tenderly the father picked up his unconscious son, and carried him home in his arms. With pity in his great heart, he tucked little Jimmy in his bed, while a poor broken mother cried as if her heart would break.

CHAPTER III

AT SEA

Dr. Dyer was called, and not until midnight did Jim regain consciousness. Then he slept until about nine o'clock Sunday morning. He woke up craving and burning within for more drink. When he arose his father and mother had little to say. Kindness and a little pleading from the father would have done a world of good; but perhaps the parents did not think that Jim had sobered up enough to reason with him.

Mrs. Parker, acting as though nothing unusual had happened, dressed her boy for church. Jim wondered how he could face Mr. Davis, the kind-hearted Town Treasurer, who was thinking of paying Jim's expenses at Moody Bible Institute. Timorously, Jim attended the services at the Bethany Free Baptist Church. At noon came the Sunday School hour. Jim's teacher, who was going to study for the ministry, made a fatal mistake. Instead of having a heart-to-heart talk with the boy, to find out the cause of his folly, he held him up as an example to the class.

"It was too bad that Jim got drunk, after he had been preaching on temperance. Now he's a disgrace to his family," he said.

Jim sat still and said nothing. He knew that the teacher was telling the truth, but he also knew some-

thing that the teacher did not — that he had been forced to take his first drink.

That afternoon Jim loafed around the house. The family were all feeling gloomy, as if a sudden death had occurred within their circle. The sick boy Jim went to bed early that night, dizzy, but craving for more alcohol.

On Monday morning, the family were seated around the breakfast table when up stomped Chief of Police Patrick Smith to the door. He had been a neighbor and friend of Mr. Parker's for some time. But his errand was not one of friendship. He had a summons for Jim to appear in court that morning, and Mr. Parker too, on the grounds that he had obstructed an officer in the performance of his duty. Although both Mr. Parker and the boy were supposed to go to work that morning, they appeared in court at nine o'clock. Judge Kelly was in charge. There were several "drunk" cases to be disposed of, and the Parker complaint was read off first. Jim pleaded guilty without ado, and was fined four dollars, which he paid. Mr. Parker came up next. Judge Kelly told him that he had done wrong in threatening the officers, when they had but fulfilled their duty.

"The place for that boy was at home with his mother, and not in one of those cells!" Mr. Parker replied.

But the judge had the last word, and fined Parker ten dollars.

The fine was paid, and the two offenders started to

leave the room. But as Mr. Parker was leaving he grumbled under his breath, "That's nothing. I don't mind the ten dollars. I'll take it out of the hide of Officer Rand."

The Judge heard him and shouted, "William Parker, come here!"

The father walked back to the front of the room.

"You are fined twenty-five dollars for contempt of court!"

That, Parker paid too. His wages at that time were \$18 a week, a fairly good sum. And he had saved for a rainy day this money that the court exacted.

Mr. Parker then hastened to the factory to work. Jim went home, his head a whirl, his soul heavy. Matters reached a climax that noon, when Mr. Parker came home to dinner. As soon as he had got in the house, he began:

"Jimmy!"

"Yes, sir!" said Jim meekly.

"Isn't it bad enough for you to get drunk and bring all this disgrace on the family, without going to work and brag that you were glad I was arrested?"

"I didn't do any such thing, pa," pleaded Jim earnestly.

"Well, your Sunday School teacher said that you told him yesterday you were glad I was arrested!" added the angry parent. "Now, sir, if you don't own up to the truth, I'll give you a lickin'!"

"I didn't tell him any such thing," Jim answered, just as sincerely as before.

"Take off your jacket!" commanded the father.

"Take it off yourself if you want it off!" defiantly answered Jim in a stubborn tone.

Mr. Parker had brought from the barn his ox raw-hide whip, which was about three feet long and knotted at the end. In a rage, he tore the jacket off his boy and set to beating him with his weapon.

"Tell me the truth and I'll stop lickin' you!" he kept saying loudly.

But Jim had told the truth, for neither he nor his father had known that they both would have to go to court, until Chief of Police Patrick Smith brought the summons that very morning. The Sunday School teacher had either deliberately lied, or had merely dreamed what he told Mr. Parker.

The father kept lacing his son, until the red drops of blood began to trickle down his little back. In the pain, though, he only laughed — a fiendish, stubborn laugh. Mrs. Parker, who from the adjoining room had heard and seen the affair, realizing that her husband was in a rage, rushed in between him and her son.

"Stop — don't lick him so hard! You've punished him enough! You'll kill him!" she cried, just as the chord of the ox whip wound around her neck. The knot buried itself in her cheek. The blood began to flow. The elder Parker, who was almost broken hearted because his son, whom he really loved, had brought such a disgrace upon the family, when he saw his own wife in front of him, with blood gushing from her cheek, came to his senses and stopped

beating the boy. In a daze he ate his dinner, and started back to work. He had only tried to do his duty as a father. He knew that to "spare the rod" was to "spoil the child." He had not intended to punish Jim, but when a rumor came to his ears that Jim had been glad on account of his father's arrest, the paternal ire blazed forth. He wanted the truth from Jim, and although in reality he had heard the truth, he believed his boy had been lying. And so he left his son, dear to his heart, bleeding! And his wife, so kind, so tender, with a deep gash in her cheek!

But as Mr. Parker proceeded to the factory, he did not notice sneaking behind him the son of whom he had been thinking. For Jim was also going to the factory, where both his father and his Sunday School teacher worked, to give that teacher of his a lesson he would never forget! With his undershirt torn to shreds, with his back bunched and bleeding, he sneaked along until his father reached the factory gate, which Mr. Parker unlocked. He went in, but did not notice a foot that Jim had placed in the door to prevent its locking. As soon as the father was a safe distance away, Jim slyly crept into the factory, and followed his father to the cutting room. Jim spied a large steel dye, made in the shape of a shoe; he seized it and hurled it at his Sunday School teacher, who was standing nearby. At the same instant he told his superior that he was a liar. The dye missed the young man by only a few inches. If it had hit him in the head it would have killed him. Jim, who for the first time had thought of how impos-

sible his father's charge had been, cried in triumph (with his father, standing open-eyed not far away):

"How could I have told you yesterday that I was glad my father was going to be arrested, when I didn't know it, or he didn't know it, until today?"

And this was all the Sunday School teacher could reply, "Well, maybe you didn't say just that, er, er — "

But Mr. Parker interrupted him in a loud voice. "Maybe didn't say it, eh? I licked my boy to make him honest and truthful, and now you say you don't know whether he said it or not!"

And then, pointing to his son's bleeding back, he cried in despair, "Look at the shape I've put him in!"

Mr. Parker moved toward the poor Sunday School teacher, whom he had been eyeing menacingly, and exclaimed in a gruff voice, "Now I'll learn you to get no other boy such a licking as that!"

At once he took his victim by the neck, and starting to choke him would perhaps have committed murder had not four huskies in the factory, using all their strength, separated the two. The Sunday School teacher quit his job, then and there.

Jim went home as quickly as he could, and told his mother all that had happened.

"I won't stay home and be licked for nothing," he said. "I'm not going to stay any longer, I'm going to run away!"

But his mother reasoned with him.

"Maybe if you go down to your Uncle Saul's, Jim, it will be better." Uncle Saul's farm was in Bear

River; and Jim listened to his mother, and thought her words of advice were good.

"Here," said that noble wounded mother, "here's five dollars. Be sure to take the boat and go down to your uncle's." She thought that he could stay there for two or three weeks, then come home and start all over again.

So Jim gathered together a few of his clothes and left his mother, who was weeping bitterly. That afternoon he boarded a train for Boston. He paid only the half fare, being a minor, of twenty-five cents. Jim fully intended to obey his mother's wishes as soon as possible, but, he got in with bad company on the train. He met a man, infamous because of his carousings, from Whitman. He told the man his story. That drunkard had no money. Jim had money. Jim could not buy alcoholics in Boston, because he was a minor. His "friend," though, could purchase all he wanted, and saw an opportunity to get some free drinks. So he told the boy that he could easily get a ride on some old coaster — could stow himself away on board some Nova Scotia-bound ship. Jim, who had been craving for alcohol since he awoke from his drinking début, took his newly made "friend's" words in good faith to be true. When they got off the train at the Old Colony Depot, Jim gave the man a dollar. He soon returned with two pints of whiskey. Each drank a bottle. As was the usual course with all alcoholic addicts, they both wanted more. So Jim gave his friend another dollar. He bought two more pints,

which they both drank. Now Jim told himself that once and for all he would have his fill. So he had his "friend" buy two quarts of fifty cent liquor — one, a bottle of John Lyons Rum, the other, a bottle of John Lyons Whiskey. All the rest of his money, he gave to his "friend."

By that time Jim was on top of the world. He felt like a real he-man. His little body tingled with that sensation which attaches men to alcohol. Intoxicated, he hastened as best he could to the South Boston Wharf, and stowed himself away, when nobody was looking, on the *Race Horse*, Captain Waite, owner.

There in the hold of that ship Jim drank and drank until both bottles were empty. But so much undiluted whiskey and rum produced another craving in Jim, greater than the first. His body cried for water. Nearly driven mad for lack of that necessity he staggered to the deck about dawn of the next day. The coaster had left Boston and was about off Gloucester. The captain spied Jim, and was not long hearing the boy's story. At first, he gave Jim water; then he saw for himself the stripes on Jim's back, and the still bleeding wounds. He took particular care of the boy, for he knew his father, Captain Bill Parker, and also Uncle Saul.

Early one morning, almost a week later, at about three o'clock, he put Jim ashore at Weymouth, thirty-nine miles below Bear River, where the custom officers would not catch the boy. Captain Waite had treated Jim fine — had given him good advice, telling him to

go to his uncle's. All that day the boy Jim walked. He did not eat a morsel of food. That night, the day being Thursday, he slept under a tree in a field adjoining the road. It did not rain that night, and refreshed by sleep, but not by food, he again hit the road for Bear River. He reached his uncle's farm at five that afternoon, and there had his first meal since he had left the ship.

Uncle Saul regarded Jim coldly from the beginning. He heard Jim's story, saw the wounds on the boy's back, and, of course, gave him plenty of food to eat. But Uncle Saul was only a lumberjack and mill worker, had six children of his own to feed and clothe, and could not think of boarding other people's children "free gratis." After a day or so, Saul urged Jim to write to his parents and ask them for money, that he might go home. But Jim did not want to return home — rather, he had a great desire to "see the world."

He had hardly been in Bear River two weeks, when opportunity knocked at his door. He had a chance to go to sea as cabin boy on the *Harry Stewart*, owned by Clark Brothers, Bear River. It was a three-masted ship, and required a crew of twelve men. Jim applied for the position of cabin boy, and Saul vouched for his nephew.

Jim was a little over thirteen years old when he shipped on the *Harry Stewart*. Her foremast and mainmast were square-rigged, while her mizzenmast was fore-and-aft rigged. In back of the bowsprit was

a minor hold, where the jibs, extra sails, canvas, tools, odds and ends were stored. It also served as an emergency storehouse for the ship's cargo. Then came the foremast, which acted as a main pillar for the fore-castle. There the crew made their homes, where they slept, ate their meals at the table which wound around the foremast, and idled away their spare time. In back of the fore-castle was the galley, where the cook prepared the meals. The captain's food had to be taken to the cabin, but the cook shoved the food for the crew through a hole (shut and opened by a paneled door in his wall) to the fore-castle. To the rear of the galley was the mainmast, which acted as a center for the hold, the largest compartment of all, where the cargo was deposited. The mizzenmast was the main support for the cabin, which took up about all of the stern, except the rudder room. In the cabin, the captain and the cabin boy made their homes. The captain wrote his log there, and directed the affairs of the ship.

The captain was William Thibeault, a Frenchman, and a kindly man, who took a liking to Jim from the first. Jim found that his most important job was to act as a servant to Captain Thibeault. Jim had to keep the cabin clean, black the captain's shoes, and do other work which Thibeault might designate. He also was assistant to the cook — chopped the wood, pared the potatoes, and in other ways helped prepare the meals.

Jim had no trouble in getting acquainted. One of the crew was an old crony, Ned Winchester, of Bear

River. Ned helped Jim make friends with the rest of the crew, and told stories to the other boys about incidents in years gone by.

The good ship *Harry Stewart* put to sea the last part of July, 1893, from Bear River, bound to Trinidad and Cuba, with a cargo of lumber. Before the *Harry Stewart* was many days out to sea, Jim grew accustomed to his new tasks. His cook boss was a colored man, "Old Joe," who weighed two hundred eighty pounds. Sometimes he would be cross, and boss Jim around in a gruff manner. At other times he was kindly. He had for a pet a goat, which wandered around the ship scot-free. "Old Joe" loved his pet; so did all the crew, for that matter. Mr. Goat was trained, too. For whenever a member of the crew put out his hand, palm forward in an inviting manner, Mr. Goat would lower his head and rush at that hand with all his butting power.

The cook dumped the swill in the ocean, except when they came to certain zones where it was unlawful to do that. Then he would collect it in a large barrel. The grease would rise to the top, and "Old Joe" would scrape this off and make soap of it. Now it so happened, one day, that "Old Joe" was leaning over into the barrel, leisurely scraping off the greasy top layer. On that particular day Jim was not feeling particularly friendly with "Old Joe," and his long-suppressed spirit of "practical joke" overcame him. Seeing the goat nearby, Jim quietly sneaked up to "Old Joe" and stretched out his hand next to the cook's posterior.

Mr. Goat eyed it for a minute, saw Jim's inviting eye, and then charged toward it. But, quick as a flash, Jim withdrew his hand, and wham! The goat crashed into his owner and best friend, sending the unfortunate victim into the swill barrel head foremost. His plump body got wedged in there, and had not the other members of the crew come to his rescue, and, amid gales of laughter, pulled him by the legs from that barrel, "Old Joe" might have been drowned on board ship. When he came out, his face was so covered with grease, that he almost looked like a white man. He vainly tried to find out who had been responsible. But no one would tell. As he went into the forecandle to clean up, he ordered Jim to mop the floor; which Jim did, chuckling to himself all the time. "Old Joe" never found out whom to blame for that trick, but as long as he lived, he never again turned his back on that goat.

Jim found that Captain Thibeault was about the only religiously inclined man on board ship. Every Sunday the good captain brought out the Bible and read from it to the crew. Captain Thibeault saw to it that they did no unnecessary labor on that day.

On week days when the crew were not scrubbing the decks or doing some other work, they would make mats out of rope and fiber, to sell to natives when they returned to Bear River. They would also drink, and not infrequently became intoxicated. They soon found out that Jim, youth that he was, had a born craving for alcohol. He soon became well known for

the amount he could consume, and yet not appear to be drunk. But when the ship reached Trinidad, Jim tried their rum, which tasted like syrup to him. And he spent much of his \$12, for his first month's services on ship, for that beverage. He was soon so intoxicated, however, that his ship fellows had to carry him bodily back to the *Harry Stewart*. All the crew except the captain had been drinking heavily at Trinidad, but none as heavily as the boy Parker. From Trinidad they sailed to Jamaica, where they took on molasses, cane sugar, and other general merchandise for Bear River. While they were at Jamaica, the crew drank heavily, and drew all the money they could get from Captain Thibeault, to buy rum and Cuban cigars. These they hid aboard their ship, to smuggle into Bear River, where the natives, who cared to drink, paid many times the Jamaica price for the rum, and would even then dilute it about four times. One cent's worth of cigars in Cuba would equal almost fifty cents' worth in Bear River. So smuggling was a very profitable business, and rarely, if ever, did the sailors get caught at it.

They reached Bear River around the first of December, and unloaded their cargo. Captain Thibeault soon found that Jim was a good worker, and helped hustle the cargo off in grand fashion. The crew had just time to sell their smuggled goods, for they were soon reloaded with lumber; and about two weeks after they had arrived at Bear River, they were off again with a full hold. This time their port was San Fugas, Cuba.

By the time they had left San Fugas, "Old Joe," two-hundred-and-eighty-pound cook, had been taken sick with the dreaded yellow fever. Captain Thibeault and the others all expected that they, too, would come down with the fatal malady. Indeed, it did prove to be fatal, for Cuba was not many days behind, when "Old Joe" died. Captain Thibeault gathered his crew together, read an appropriate chapter from the Bible, and then prayed. Poor "Old Joe's" body was rolled up in a canvas, and thrown into the sea. That was the end of him.

During Joe's illness, Jim had done the cooking for the crew. At first he was awkward, but soon he learned to do all the things he had seen "Old Joe" do. After the former cook's death, Captain Thibeault appointed Jim temporary cook. Jim went at his new task with vim. He mixed up dough every other night, kneaded the bread, baked it, and fed it to his fellow-men. He cooked up vegetables, boiled corned beef, made cake, and fried doughnuts. Captain Thibeault helped Jim at first, but by the time they had reached Bear River with their cargo of general merchandise, Jim was in full charge of the cooking, and had shown to his captain and the rest of the crew that he was a capable, resourceful, and reliable cook.

In March, 1894, they reached Bear River, where Captain Thibeault got a permanent appointment for Jim as cook on the *Harry Stewart*. By that time he was about fourteen years old, and was the youngest cook known to sail the seas. He had been a boy-

preacher; he was now a boy-cook, five foot six inches tall, and weighing one hundred and thirty pounds.

Along about the first of April the ship set sail for Cuba, Jamaica, New York, and home — with a proud boy as cook. Jim's pay was advanced to \$30 a month. His work was hard, but he didn't mind that. He made yeast from potatoes, and early in the morning, three or four times a week, raised his bread, and baked it. For breakfasts he would fry dough, and perhaps give the crew some cold meat. For dinner, corned beef, which on ship was called "corned horse," was the main dish. Cabbage, carrots, beets, and other vegetables made the extras. The men liked cheese with any meal, and the older and moldier it was, the better they liked it. Usually there were sixty-odd live chickens on board when they left Bear River; but those were killed exclusively for the captain, the mate, the second mate, and the cook.

Whenever there was sickness on board, Captain Thibeault was the doctor. The captain was a middle-sized man, stockily built, and of dark complexion. He rarely uttered a harsh word. He acted as a leaven for the crew, who cursed and drank as most sailors did. If, while on shore, a policeman tried to arrest any of them, they would all pitch in to help their fellow in distress. Usually it was Jim for whom they had to fight. For Jim, when he was sober, got along very easily with everybody. But when he was drunk, he became very quarrelsome.

For a few days after the *Harry Stewart* left a

port, the members of the crew would get along very well with each other. After a week had passed, invariably there would be a fight. The boys would leave Cuba smiling, and be snarling before they reached Nova Scotia. Jim would be in most of the brawls, which were not serious affairs, but were just amusing. One of the crew persisted in slapping Jim's face whenever the chance offered. Jim soon stopped that, however, by throwing at him a marline-spike, a pointed iron tool, used in splicing and marling. Sometimes his superior would give an order, Jim would not obey, and then the fight would begin.

If a storm arose, the whole crew would have to be on deck. That order included Jim, but it was the only time he would have to do service on deck. The watches at which the men took turns were from 12 M. to 4 P.M., 4 to 6 P.M. (dog watch), 6 to 8 P.M. (dog watch), 8 P.M. to 12 M., 12 M. to 4 A.M., 4 to 8 A.M., and 8 A.M. to 12 M. Of course, in case of a storm, the sails were all let down and reefed; for the storm winds would tip the ship over in no time if the sails were not reefed. Storms were quite frequent, and Jim saw many of them.

On the other hand, if there was a calm, the ship would perhaps settle in one spot for four or five days. Then Captain Thibeault would have the men scrub the floors and shine the brasswork. A calm was a nerve-racking period.

Jim was not only the youngest, but also the lightest man on board the *Harry Stewart*. For that rea-

son he was chosen to do work in the rigging of the ship. He soon learned to go up those masts hand over hand like a monkey. He soon felt at home on the very top-most perch of those masts.

Whenever the ship sailed into a port, almost always there was fun and adventure in store. But always the "boys" had to get drinking. One day the *Harry Stewart* anchored in Boston Harbor. The crew all received shore leave, and hurried to the barrooms, where rowdies and trouble-makers usually assembled to talk over affairs and consume alcohol. At one of those bars Jim met his cousin, Grant Nichols, who was also on leave from another ship. Nichols proposed that they all have their fortunes told. He also told Jim and his companions of a spiritualist, Madame LeBlanc, who could bring back the dead to life, and even make them talk. Now among those from the crew of the *Harry Stewart* was a husky red-headed Irishman from Bear River, by the name of Jack O'Brien. Now Jack questioned whether this Madame LeBlanc could really bring back the dead to life, and finally came out with his conviction that such stuff was humbug.

So all the boys — Jack O'Brien, Grant Nichols, Ned Winchester, Jim Parker, and another — set for a good time, made their way to East Cambridge Street at North End. They knew that a good time was in store, for Jack O'Brien was typical of his race — full of fun.

Now about two weeks before, Jack had left his mother in Bear River — a living soul. When they

were all seated in Madame LeBlanc's rooms, located a few steps down from the side walk, Jack informed his companions that he'd prove that dead folk could not be brought back. Madame LeBlanc came out in the attire of a Gypsy, and sat down at the table, upon which was a big glass crystal ball. Jack informed the Madame that his mother had been dead for five years, but that he did not believe she could bring her back to earth again. Madame LeBlanc maintained she could. Jack then said that he'd give her five dollars if he could see her again. Madame LeBlanc would most assuredly get back his mother for five dollars. So she blew out all the lights except one, which acted as a sort of a spot light on the curtain in the back of the room. Then Madame LeBlanc, as she sat gazing into the crystal, made believe she was asleep. But after a minute or two, she called out in a loud voice, "Ghost!" At that moment a ghost appeared from back of the curtain — it walked and began to talk! It said to Jack that she had been in purgatory, but was all right then. At the sight of the ghost Jack burst into tears, an easy thing for him to do; for he, too, had been drinking with the other boys. Jack, between sobs, kept saying, "Poor mother!" And then he would tell the ghost how sorry he was he hadn't been more helpful around the house — hadn't cut the wood and carried the water as he ought to have. Jack, in terror, had even risen from his chair and drawn near the ghost of his departed mother, as if to worship her spirit.

Then, all of a sudden, red-headed Jack O'Brien made a dash for that ghost.

"I'll learn ya fer disgracin' me mother for makin' a ghost out of her before she dies," he hollered as he got hold of his victim. He downed the poor frightened spirit in no time, and when he tore the sheet off her face, found out she was a male negro! His mother a negro? Oh! That was too much for Jack O'Brien. Perhaps Madame LeBlanc had made a mistake, and had brought forth the spirit of "Old Joe," the cook who died of yellow fever.

At the moment Jack had jumped for the ghost, Madame LeBlanc let out a piercing shriek, and there followed a general brawl. Furniture was broken, windows smashed, and such a racket was created that soon the police arrived. The adventurers all got away from the clutches of the law, but Madame LeBlanc was arrested, and her house of fraud was never opened again.

On another occasion their ship had been towed by a tug from Bear River just to above Digby Gut. There the *Harry Stewart* became stranded in some fish weirs, which are fence-like structures, built for catching fish. It meant that the ship would have to lay idle until about ten o'clock that evening, when the tide was high.

As the men gazed from the stranded ship to the shore, their eyes spied a forest of cherry trees, laden with fruit. When Captain Thibeault saw them, he sent Jim ashore in a rowboat to see if he could buy some cherries to make pies for the boys. Jim passed the trees, about fifty in all, on his way to the owner's

house. A spinster came to the door, but when she learned his mission, told him that she had sold the whole orchard, and could not spare any of the fruit. (However, if she had been good, she could have spared some for poor sailor boys.) Jim went back to the ship with the sad news. But the sailors became angry, and vowed they would help themselves when night had come on. After dark, about nine of them went ashore. Captain Thibeault was not among those, and Jim was busy preparing the next morning's breakfast.

The nine reached shore; in the course of the evening they ate to their hearts' content and picked about two bushels of cherries — not, however, until they had seriously damaged the trees. As they were about to leave, the spinster discovered that robbers were on her premises, and unleashed her dog, which ran for the thieves. The animal succeeded in ripping the pants from one sailor, and tearing up his leg. So badly was the victim bitten, that Captain Thibeault had to wash his leg in a disinfectant, bandage it, and give him a rest. The other eight men were not harmed. The cherries were made into pies the next day, and consumed with relish. However, some of the men had over-eaten. They felt sick, and cursed the cherries, cursed the dog, cursed the spinster, and cursed the weirs which had caused the trouble.

During the years Jim sailed the seas, he had many experiences such as those. Every niche and board of

the *Harry Stewart* became familiar to him. By the time he had reached his nineteenth year, he could climb like an ape, cook like a professional, drink like a demon, and fight like a madman. One thing Jim never learned to do, however, and that was to swim. An odd sailor he was — for he never swam a stroke in his whole life. He saved what money he did not consume in drink, and between his salary and the profits from smuggling, he accumulated about \$1800, which he wore secure in his money belt.

During his years at sea, he had not written home once to his family. A heart-broken mother prayed daily for her son's safety and return. While he was careless, she was in sorrow; while he was indifferent, she was in tears; while he rejected God, she implored Him. Her sorrow, her tears, her prayers — were they in vain?

CHAPTER IV

HOME AGAIN

About October 15, 1899, the *Harry Stewart* left Jamaica with a load of molasses, sugar, tobacco, and other produce, bound for New York, where they would unload some of their cargo and take on general merchandise for Bear River. They had been sailing for three days, when, along in the afternoon, one of the boys spied a little black cloud off in the distance. That little black cloud was different from the white clouds which had been sailing over all day. It was a storm cloud. One of the crew ran to the captain, and cried, "A storm is gathering, captain!"

The good captain was not long in seeing that his helper was right.

"Stand by!" he ordered, as the men all came on deck.

"Take in sails! Reef'er!" he cried. And the men scurried about at his bidding. They closed the hatchways and cleated them. Two men were tied fast to the steering wheel, to keep the ship on its course, if possible. The others lashed themselves to the rigging. Hardly had all that been done, when the big drops began to descend. The cloud broke, the seas

swelled, the winds roared, the thunder sounded, the lightning flashed. The waves began to tumble over the deck, and soon they had washed every movable object overboard.

All night long the storm lasted. All night long those men stood, facing the elements, soaked to the skin. They were exhausted when the rain stopped about five in the morning; soon after the sun shone. One railing on the ship had been smashed in. Water had soaked through the hatchways, and into the fore-castle, galleys, cabin, and holds. Of course, the crew were discouraged, but happy because their ship had not been sunk and their lives and cargo lost.

As soon as Jim had unloosened himself from his position back of the cabin, he unlatched the door into the galley. The wood was wet, the dishes smashed, and the food soaked. He had some difficulty in starting a fire, which he finally did by ripping some of the boards off of the potato box. Jim started to make coffee. Others went to the fore-castle to get on dry clothes. But there were no dry clothes. The water had soaked everything, and the boat had swayed so much in the night that the great iron stove had tipped over. They started to straighten things out when the captain called the first mate down into the hold. A few moments afterwards both men appeared on deck, and with frightened looks, and a shaky voice the captain said, "She's leaking! We'll have to man the pumps!" Captain Thibeault was a God fearing man, who was never afraid to meet his Maker. He

wasn't easily scared, but this time he really seemed dazed.

Now the *Harry Stewart* was an old ship. She ought to have been retired long before as unseaworthy. But the Company at Bear River had wished to get every penny's worth out of her. As a result, she did not hold up well during that storm of '99, and several seams had opened in the hold. The water had been leaking in for some time when Captain Thibeault gave the order to man the pumps. He realized that the situation was dangerous.

Four men hastened below to turn the water back where it belonged. There were two on each side, pumping alternately. When they had worked a half hour, four others relieved them. In the meantime Jim had raised some dough, fried it, and had distributed it among the men. He also served them coffee to drink with their cold slaw and raw onions — sort of a "junk" breakfast that morning. They ate no dinner, but worked right through.

However, for all their efforts, the water kept rising little by little, and the ship was way off her course. Then, all of a sudden the water rose higher and higher.

Captain Thibeault shouted, "Man the boats! We've done all we can! She's going to sink!"

Poor Captain Thibeault should have realized that hours before. But he unselfishly had wished to save his Company's ship and cargo. The two lifeboats were lowered. There was a lot of jabbering among the men, who shook hands with each other and bade

hasty farewells. Captain Thibeault gave his last order:

"Take to the boats!"

Jim hastened to his room to get his money belt, and two quarts of — water? No! D——d Trinidad rum.

"Hurry up! We want to get away!" shouted the mate to Jim.

Jim was the last man to leave the battered *Harry Stewart*. As soon as he had slid down the rope into the lifeboat, they pushed off. With him were: Judson Pierce, from Annapolis way, first mate; Alvin Morgan, from Bear River, second mate; Ned Winchester, from Trout Cove; Arthur Rice, from Bear River; and Dupro, an old Frenchman, from down Weymouth way. In the other boat Jim saw: Captain Thibeault, from Bear River; Owl Jenson, from Digby; Jack O'Brien, from Bear River; Bert Jackson, Jack Kempton, and Jud Peters — all from "up the river," Annapolis way.

Two men took the oars, and they began to make their exodus as fast as they could. They had rowed but a few yards, when the water-filled *Harry Stewart* turned on its side and then sank, stern first, underneath the water. Jim looked all around for the lifeboat in which Captain Thibeault and five others had embarked; but it was nowhere to be seen, nor was it ever seen again by man. Evidently the suction, caused by the submersion of the *Harry Stewart*, had drawn the helpless lifeboat in its wake. If the other one, containing Jim and his companions, had been but

a few yards nearer, it too would have suffered the same fate.

Alone, the little dory waited until dark. There was no food on board, no water. Only those two confounded quarts of Trinidad rum. Jim started in drinking that when night came on; and some of the others had some, too. But wisely, at midnight, Mate Morgan ordered the remainder of the rum thrown overboard, since raw rum brought on a terrible thirst for water. All night long they idled about. None of the men were afraid, and dozed on their hard wooden benches. As soon as dawn came, however, they started in to row, taking turns at the oars. When Jim was not busy, he sat near the bow. Few words were spoken. There was little to talk about. None of them were professed Christians, so no one proposed a hymn or a prayer. They were all hungry and thirsty — but of the two wants the lack of water was by far the worst.

And so the first day passed, with pain and agony increasing, with hope of rescue decreasing. Night drew on. The mate, with a kindly spirit, took off his red flannel shirt, tied it to an oar, and lashed the oar upright in the front of the boat. As the long hours of the evening began to go, moans came up from the men in their agony, "God give me water!" or "Oh, for a drink of water!" About midnight, up spoke the mate for himself and Dupro, "We're going to have a drink now if it kills us!"

Then Pierce and Dupro dished up two or three hand-

fuls of sea water, and eagerly drank. But that only increased their misery. About a half hour later, the mate, who was seated amidship, cried, "I'd rather be in hell than the way I am now!" With that he jumped overboard, and was drowned.

At his action there was no response, except from Dupro, in the stern — opposite Jim, who, exhausted, exclaimed, "Good bye, boys! I'm going, too." With that, he jumped over, and was lost in the dark sea.

That left but four men in the dory: Arthur Rice, Ned Winchester, Alvin Morgan, and Jim Parker — all that remained alive from the crew of twelve.

The second day dawned. The red flannel shirt blew its signal in the light breeze, but no rescue ship saw it. What agony, what hell those four suffered. They cried for water, but they cried in vain. Jim, too weak and exhausted to stay awake, would doze off. He kept dreaming. He would see his mother bringing him a cup of cold water, and be about to consume it, when he would wake up. Then he would doze off again, only to dream the same thing.

The third day dawned; the sun set that night with no rescuers in sight. The fourth night went; but still that little boat drifted. If a storm had come up it would have been swamped and sunk in no time.

The fourth day came silently, without event; it went as silently and eventless as it came.

The fifth night came. Arthur Rice was dead. So was Alvin Morgan, the second mate. Ned Winchester and Jim Parker were failing fast. Their hearts

beat slowly. Their lips were purple. Their faces looked dead.

But behold, on the dawning of the fifth day, a sailor on the Dutch tramp ship *Dutchland* sighted the red banner of the dory. It was not long before the tramp had come alongside the smaller craft, and taken up the living and the dead. The *Dutchland* was carrying passengers and merchandise to Boston.

On board ship was a doctor. He soon discovered that two of the men were dead, and two could possibly be called living. So they buried the bodies of Arthur Rice and Alvin Morgan in the sea. Jim and Ned were undressed, and put to bed. Water and medicine were put between their lips in spoonfuls. After a day or so they regained consciousness enough to be fed gruels and broths. Both were in a daze, however, and could hardly say a word. Jim could barely understand what his rescuers would say, for they spoke in broken English. They told him about the rescue, and how they had taken good care of his money belt, which contained Jim's earnings. As he lay there on one of the beds of the *Dutchland* he thought of the many gallons of Trinidad rum he had purchased for twenty-five cents, and sold for four dollars in Bear River. He thought of how good the custom officials in Nova Scotia had been to let them through. And whenever he could think, his mind went back to the last trip of the *Harry Stewart*.

About a week after the rescue, the *Dutchland* anchored in Boston Harbor. Jim Parker and Ned Win-

chester were hurried on stretchers to the Massachusetts General Hospital. The story of the shipwreck and rescue was published in the papers. Jim's father read about it, but did not let his wife know of the disaster.

The first week in the hospital, Jim and Ned were fed warm milk and warm water. Then they were nourished with gruels and beef tea. Jim had a pretty nurse, whom in time he grew to hate, because she would not give him enough water. The second week, he was fed the regular hospital food. The doctors began to question Jim and asked him where he lived. Then the insurance agents besieged him, to find out all the details of the wreck, the value of the cargo, and so forth.

It was along toward the first of November, in 1899, as Jim lay on his back philosophizing, that his thought turned toward the home he had left over six years before. He had not written home, and he wondered if his mother and father were still living. They might have been dead, for all he had cared.

After he had been in the hospital for three weeks, he was discharged. Even when he had paid his bill, he had about \$1750 left in cash. Instead of going directly home, as he had decided in the hospital, he lived around at different lodging houses. Seventy-five dollars went for the best suit he could buy. He drank and gambled, and spent much time at the Hotel Italy, where drinkers and gamblers assembled. When December 15th came, he celebrated the 18th anniversary

of his birth. He was nineteen years old that day. He continued to consume his money in riotous living. Fortunately, he was not arrested once, but seemed to be able to hold his liquor and walk straight. His favorite barroom was the "Nut Shells," where Nova Scotia men usually hung out. There Jim told stories and drank, but, fortunately, did not get to fighting.

In the meantime Ned Winchester had been discharged from the hospital. He went directly home to Bear River, and after a short visit there, he again took to sea, this time on the *Ethel Clark*. But that ship never reached its destination, for it was lost at sea with all men on board. No word was ever heard of it. That left only James Parker living of the twelve men from the *Harry Stewart*.

By New Year, Jim had but \$1300 left of his money. He decided to go home that night and surprise the folks. He would indeed show his father that he could get along very well without paternal guidance. Now "No license" was in force at Whitman, and Jim knew that he could buy no drinks there. He also knew that he was so addicted to alcohol that he could not get along without it. So he purchased two cheap suitcases; one he filled with eight pints of rum, and the other with six pints of whiskey. With those, along with his clothes, he boarded a train which arrived at Whitman about 7:30 P.M.

Jim was dressed in his old clothes; his custom-made suit had been packed in one of the suit cases. He wanted to see how his family would welcome him in

poor attire. As he approached the house where he had formerly lived, he heard music. There was a party of some sort going on. Jim began to question whether he had chosen the right house or not. However, he bravely went up to the house and rang the bell. A strange woman, not his mother, came to the door — it was Aunt Brundage, but Jim did not know her.

“Could you tell me where William Parker, that used to live here, lives now?” he inquired courteously.

“Why he still lives here,” the woman replied. “Who are you?”

“I’m Jim, his son.”

The surprised Aunt stepped back, and quickly said, “Come right in — I’ll tell your mother!”

In a moment his mother came running up, and after taking one look, exclaimed, “My God! It’s Jim!”

With that earnest salutation, she threw her arms around his neck, and wept.

Gertie, Jim’s sister, was having a party. Her brothers, sisters, and thirty or forty of her shop mates had given her a surprise — and a rocking chair as a present, for Gertie was seventeen years old. Jim’s brothers and sisters fell on his neck when they saw their long lost Jim. Some of the young men at the party were quite friendly; others held themselves aloof, knowing that a trouble maker had come back home.

Jim spied his father before his father spied him.

“Hello dad,” he said.

“Hello,” replied his father, looking up. “What brought you back here?”

"I came back to see mother," affirmed Jim.

"If you think so much of your mother, why didn't you write to her?" queried the father.

"I ain't no hand at writin' — never thought of it," said Jim.

"Hmm," was all his father replied.

Then Jim went upstairs and put on his new clothes. It was not long before he had joined the happy young people at the surprise party. Jim had been the biggest surprise of all. He joined in the games: London Bridge and Blind Man's Buff. Some danced old time waltzes; other did not, because they did not know how.

Soon Jim began to crave for drink. He thought of the suitcases upstairs, and their contents. So up he went and opened a pint. When it was nearly finished he went downstairs, and, to be sociable, offered some of the boys a sip or two. Many of the men folks took the opportunity to wet their whistles; and it was not long before five pints had been put away. Jim appeared sober, but when he looked at the others, he found them rather out of control. One got impious with Jim's brother's wife, Mrs. William Parker, Junior. She slapped his face. There was an argument. Father Parker, in the kitchen, heard the row and came into the room in his stocking feet. When he found out what had happened, he said:

"I'm not goin' to have anything like this around — I'll learn you something!"

With that he took the youth, who had done the insulting, by the nape of the neck, and actually threw

him out of the house. Then he ejected all who seemed to be under the influence of liquor.

All that happened at about 8:30 P.M. The girls cried. Some one called the cops. The whole Whitman Police Department arrived on the scene: Pat Smith, Andrew McKellan, and Bill Churchhill. They wore no uniforms, but displayed shining badges. The party broke up, the police left, and things got quiet. But the quiet was disturbed by the arguing of Jim and his father. Jim hadn't realized that those boys could get drunk so easily. And that is what he told his father.

"I had no intention of breaking the party up," he pleaded.

"Why most of those fellows never have a drink — perhaps once a year," his father replied. "Bad enough for you to drink that stuff yourself, without your getting the other fellows drunk!"

But Mother Parker straightened matters out, and soon the father and son became peaceful. Jim showed his father his money — about \$1300. Mr. Parker's eyes sparkled when he saw it. Sure enough, Jim could get along by himself, and save money, too. Jim told his folks all about his past six years — about his experiences, the men he associated with, the sinking of the *Harry Stewart*, and other things. Jim talked for some time about Captain Thibeault, of whom he had been fond. Mrs. Parker soon went to bed, and left her husband and son talking to each other. Jim retired at one o'clock that night. When he got up the

next morning, at about nine, he did not feel ashamed of his actions the night before.

News of the arrival back home of Jim Parker spread like wildfire throughout the town. The story of a drunken party went with it. Jim decided to smooth over affairs in the family by purchasing a stair carpet. That cost him about \$15, and won the good will of his father.

For about three weeks all went well. Jim drank his stock of liquor, but did not, during that time, become a nuisance. He would have a gallon of raw whiskey come out from Boston every now and then, by Pennerman's Express. He treated the rougher young men; and it was soon noised about that Jim had made a fortune at sea.

He played poker now and then; usually he was a winner. But there arose a plot against him. A gang, including Jim, was pretty well tanked with raw whiskey, and playing cards in the back of Jim Gardner's tobacco shop on Gurney Place. About six of the boys were "out" to get Jim's money. One had an ace up his sleeve. Jack Gleason, a six foot rawboned friend of Jim's, who was going around with Gertie, Jim's sister, saw the trick. He let Jim know what was happening, and grabbed the money on the table. A general brawl followed — Jim and Jack against the others. The furniture was soon smashed to pieces. The officers of the law heard the noise and came running up. Jim Parker, Jack Gleason, and all the others except Jim Gardner got away. The officers caught the unfortu-

nate Gardner, but he did not tell the names of the others; he feared that some one might tell more about him. He was running the "Kitty," a gambling den, from which he made a considerable sum. In order to smooth up the affair and the room, however, Jim had to pay about \$75.

Jim soon became known as a general trouble-maker. He put what money he had left in the bank, where it would be safe from the hands of his hard boiled companions. Respectable people looked at him slant-eyed when they met him on the street. He was suspected of every bit of deviltry that went on in town, whether he had been a guilty party or not.

In the spring of 1900, the Young Men's Christian Association had a big drive in Whitman. They had hired the whole top floor of a building in the center of the town, where there was a gymnasium, with punching bags, Indian clubs, and locker rooms with shower baths nearby. Also, religious meetings were held, where boys were asked to give their hearts to the great Master, and follow Him. It so happened that the drive for new members was inaugurated by a contest between the "Reds" and the "Blues." John, Jim's older brother, was chosen captain of the Blues. John saw in this a chance to do some good to his drunkard brother, so he begged Jim to join. Jim did join; perhaps because it would help his brother's side. The membership cost four dollars for initiation, and one dollar a month dues thereafter. In order to have

joined the Y. M. C. A., a youth had to be of high moral character, and not a drinker. Jim stopped drinking; and not only that, but got many of his companions to join the "Y" too. He paid many an initiation fee, knowing that he was helping his brother's side. At night, instead of carousing, the boys played dominoes, checkers, and other respectable games, under the guiding wings of the Y. M. C. A. But, when nobody was looking, a few of Jim's crowd would sneak into the locker rooms and play cards.

When the contest came to a close, John's side, the Blues, had won. That was due to the funds and efforts of his younger brother, Jim. Now the winning side, of course, had a banquet. Officials were invited, and a great affair was planned. Jim and his twenty odd companions were planning an affair of their own, though; for Jim had ordered from Pennerman's Express a keg of beer, to be left the night of the banquet in the side hallway of the building where the Y. M. C. A. made their headquarters. If, of course, the expressman had known it was for the Y. M. C. A., he would never have delivered it. But it was addressed to "Jim Parker." When it came, Jim was on the watch to receive it, and soon had it up in the gymnasium. Unbeknown to Jim, his pals had also planned their part, and smuggled "hard stuff" into their lockers.

One floor below the gymnasium, a banquet was held. There were plenty of eats and plenty of speeches. Upstairs, at about nine in the evening, some twenty new members gathered to have their own private cele-

bration. Jim gave them beer; but when the others brought forth from hiding places bottles of whiskey, Jim was at a loss — for he really had only planned a tame beer party. So they all had hard drinks, and used beer as a chaser.

Around 9:30, up the steps trod stalwart John, who had never taken a drink of intoxicating liquor in his life. He had grown to be quite a man while Jim was at sea. He had become a light-weight boxer, and had been in several professional fights. When he came into the gymnasium and saw all his fellow Blues drinking, and his own brother among them, in anger he upbraided Jim.

“You’ve been a disgrace ever since you came home! Why don’t you cut it out?”

To which Jim replied, “It’s none of your business. I’ll do what I like; I’ve been trying to get new members for you — doing a good turn.”

Then John replied angrily, “If you don’t get this booze out I’ll have the officers pitch you out of here and have you expelled!”

Somebody in the crowd asked him if he wanted a drink. “No! I’ll never take that stuff!” replied John.

Another new member put in a suggestion. “Let’s make John take a drink, and then he can’t say anything.”

That suggestion met with the approval of many of the new recruits. So they tried to force liquor into John. But at that point Jim remembered his own

bitter experience in the nail factory, when he himself had been forced to drink. Quick as lightning he sided in with his brother. Then others took sides with Jim and John, until the boys were about evenly divided. There followed a pitched battle, in which three or four doors were smashed, lockers broken, and the place partially wrecked. Although policemen were not far away in the streets below, they either did not hear the battle, or they may have thought there was a basket ball game going on. In ten or fifteen minutes the fight ended. Jim and John went home together, both mad as hornets with each other.

The next morning the officials found the beer keg (which was almost empty) addressed to "Jim Parker." He and about twenty of his companions were expelled. Jim asked for the initiation fees that he had donated, but those hardly paid for the damage done. There was that affair for the town to talk about; and the name of Jim Parker was very closely associated with it.

John had a girl friend whose name was Nellie Smith. When the night of the Firemen's Ball arrived, Nellie Smith and John Parker attended. Jim had never danced in his life, and had nothing to do with the girls. It had been his custom to shun them; and shun them he did. But that night, after consuming his daily portion of alcohol, he found himself outside the dance hall, drinking in intoxicating music. He made his way to the hall, and was standing inside, when along came Nellie and John. They had seemed to be quar-

reling. Now Jim was a good-looking chappie. The girls admitted that. They just admired his snappy brown eyes, his rosy cheeks, his jet black hair. He didn't look like a drunkard at heart; and even outwardly appeared the gentleman. He dressed well, and wore well when sober.

Now Nellie saw her chance to anger John still further. She approached Jim, who was slightly intoxicated (both by alcohol and music), and asked him to dance with her. Jim saw her scheme, and wanting to do a good turn for Nellie, and to do a bad turn for his brother, accepted her kind, thoughtful invitation to dance. Nellie was arrayed in a long dress which hung to the floor, according to the fashion. So they started off. Nellie led, and Jim followed. They came to the middle of the floor; Nellie decided to whirl. But as she did so, Jim's clumsy, untrained foot caught in Nellie's long dress. And as they whirled around, her dress came off. The dance stopped abruptly. All looked at poor Nellie, clad in her underclothes. There was much hollering and laughing. She hurried away home, crying hysterically. Jim was put out of the hall by Nellie's friends, who thought the trouble-maker had deliberately committed the outrage. John Parker and Nellie Smith were never friends after that — and Jim Parker never went to another dance.

Cousin Bill Videto came down from Bear River, and went to work in the Commonwealth. Jim and his cousin made good friends. They were nearly the

same age, Bill being but three days younger than Jim. Bill paid for his board and room at the Parker homestead, and even Jim had good-heartedly given his mother four dollars a week ever since he had returned home. Now cousin Videto got acquainted with a girl by the name of Lillian Fisher. That Lillian had an older sister by the name of Eva, who was a fine looking girl, a member of the Congregational Church in town. Through the agency of Bill, for the first time in his life, Jim went calling on a girl — Eva Fisher. In those days Jim used to drink, but would rarely be under the influence of liquor, or even show by his actions that he had been drinking.

Salted peanuts had just come out on the market. Eva loved salted peanuts, and whenever she was out walking with Jim, according to her custom, she asked for salted peanuts. One day Eva, Lillian, Bill, and Jim were out together. By the time they had strolled to Couvicci's store, Eva had decided to have peanuts. She was not long in making her wish known to Jim, who went in the store, and, seeing a great glass container of peanuts on the counter, inquired of the clerk how much the contents would cost. Mrs. Couvicci, who was waiting on Jim, told him that they would be about \$1.25. So Jim had her wrap them all up in a bag (there must have been nearly six quarts in all), paid the bill, and, hoping they would be enough for Eva, left the store.

With the remark, "I hope this will be enough peanuts to satisfy you for a week," he handed the bag to

Eva. The surprised girl opened the bag, looked at Jim, blushed, slapped his face, threw the bag on the sidewalk, and left immediately. Lillian and Bill laughed, and amused themselves by making remarks to Jim. That was the end of Jim's first love affair.

On Beulah Street, near Temple Street, there lived a somewhat simple-minded woman by the name of Martha Fullerton. Yet she kept a very neat house, and besides, sold candy, cigars, and soft drinks in her parlor. Her show case was a model of cleanliness and order. One night Jim took Bill over there for his cousin's first visit. There were about eight of the young men standing around smoking and talking. Bill seemed rather bashful, and stood on one side of Jim, silently listening to what was being said. Martha, fat and shabby, with streaming hair, rocked back and forth in her chair behind the counter. Jim, who was chewing tobacco, saw his chance for fun. He spat his tobacco on the floor beside Bill, who did not realize that it appeared that he had made the mess. Jim's eye caught Martha's. Now she always kept her floors clean, and wanted them always to be clean. She hastened for her mop, and wiped up the tobacco juice hurriedly. Then, without warning, she swished the mop into Bill's face saying:

"You'll never spit tobacco juice in a decent person's house again!"

Now Bill had never chewed tobacco in his life. Realizing in an instant who was responsible for his

dirty face, he looked for his cousin Jim. But Jim had gone. Bill did not see him around home for about a week. Cousin Bill never went into Mrs. Fullerton's store again.

Jim and some others thought they would play another little trick on Mrs. Fullerton. They all bought two bottles of Bunker Hill Beer apiece, hid them in their overcoat pockets, and went into Mrs. Fullerton's parlor store. When the good lady was not looking, they replaced a case of Hop Beer (non-alcoholic) with one of Bunker Hill Lager. If Mrs. Fullerton were caught selling alcoholics in a no-license town like Whitman, she could have been prosecuted with the likelihood of a jail sentence and closure of her store. The boys all bought a bottle of their own real beer. One lad, when he had tasted of it, said,

"Umm. This is good beer!"

Jim then spoke. "It ought to be. Look at the label!"

The boys all looked at their labels. Mrs. Fullerton by that time had become rather curious.

"You know you could be pinched for selling real beer, Martha?" said another youth.

"I ain't selling real beer," replied Martha. "I never break the law."

Then another boy went to her and showed her the label on his bottle. The others did the same. Poor Martha became furious. "You jes wait 'til I get hold of that tonic man!" ejaculated the woman, for she abhorred liquor.

But when another lad said, "Martha, I've got a good mind to have you arrested!" the distressed lady burst into tears.

Having accomplished their purpose, the boys all left. No one heard the interview between Martha and the tonic man, but all assumed it was a hot one.

In March, 1900, a big business scheme filled Jim's thoughts. He did not have any regular job, and therefore proposed to carry out his plans immediately. His plans were these: to go into the rabbit business, clean up a fortune, and then retire. Ah, youthful dream! Without pausing too long, he persuaded his family to move to the Luddy Farm on Washington Street. Jim paid the expenses of moving.

He then hired two Italians, who had moved into town when the electric railroad had come to Whitman, for \$1.50 apiece a day. He had those two men dig a ditch one and one-half feet wide and deep, around a square piece of land one quarter of an acre in area. Then Jim had yard-wide hen wire bent in two, and one half laid horizontally in the bottom of the ditch, and the other half laid up vertically on the outer side of the ditch. That precaution Jim had taken to prevent his hares from digging out. He wired the enclosure, doing his best to make escape impossible for the rabbits. With all preparations finished for his great scheme, Jim purchased twenty pair of thoroughbred Belgian hares, at one dollar and fifty cents a pair. He fed them on cabbage leaves, turnip tops, and other

such green vegetables as sympathetic neighbors gave him.

The hares multiplied and replenished the quarter acre lot, until their numbers exceeded four hundred. They dug great holes in the ground and dwelt in them at night. For some time Jim had good success in selling them at a fair profit to the boys about town.

Next door to Jim's business headquarters lived a farmer, whose principal garden products were water-melons and muskmelons. He had told Jim all along that some day the rabbits would dig themselves out. Then there would be much mischief.

Along in August of that famous year of 1900, when the melons had reached a fairly good size, Jim was awakened one morning by his neighbor. "Come out here Jim. I want to show you something."

Jim dressed hurriedly, and went out to greet his neighbor. He found the poor farmer almost in tears. The Rabbit Raiser soon found out the reason for his neighbor's dismay. Every melon in that acre melon patch had been eaten into by the rabbits. They had burrowed their way to freedom, and used their independence to the best advantage. The farmer swore and cursed Jim. Jim swore and cursed at the rabbits. He got in such a rage, that he had them all dressed and sent to the Boston Market, for twenty-five cents a pair. All but one, rather, for Jim's mother coaxed him to keep the Maltese pet rabbit, which had lived in the house for some time.

But the big black tomcat wished that Jim had had

the Maltese rabbit dressed and sent to the Boston Market, for since the rabbit had been taken into the Parker home, the cat had acted crazy. Even the neighbors had noticed how strangely the cat was acting. He meowed a great deal, where before, he had been almost as silent as the Sphinx. Not only that, but his jet black hair, apparently, had fallen out in great blotches. The Parkers did not know what to make of that, until, one day, Mrs. Parker saw that Maltese rabbit dash from the guest room. Curious to see what had been going on in there, Mrs. Parker went in. And there on the bed with its clean spread, was a nest made out of cat fur, and in it were four little rabbits. That mother rabbit had been plucking the fur from the old tomcat's back for a nest for her young!

Again Jim went into the pet business, for it was not long after he had sold his rabbits that he bought five pair of white rats, at fifty cents a pair. These he kept in the attic in wire boxes. They filled the attic in no time, and Jim began to make good money selling them to the boys of the neighborhood. One day, however, when he was away, his mother waited on a customer, and unintentionally sold a mother of little ones. The next morning, when he went up to feed his animals, Jim found several babies motherless, and frozen on the floor. That disgusted him, and he sold them all out at from twenty to thirty cents a pair.

CHAPTER V

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

During those months of adventurous business undertakings, Jim had got acquainted with a fine girl by the name of Fannie Belbin. Now Fannie's aunt had married Jim's uncle, which made them all the more good friends. Fannie — a seventeen year old brunette — was a Christian girl, a member of the Baptist Church; and it was not long before her good influence began to be manifest in Jim. For her sake, he stopped his drinking of alcoholics.

The affair went on for some months, and they talked of marriage. Wisely enough, though, Fannie's mother thought they ought not to get married for at least two years. Together they made visits to Mayflower Grove, and at the time of the Brockton Fair, James Parker and Fannie Belbin were seen there, participating in the fun of the season.

By that time Jim had got employment at B. S. Atwood's, Box Manufacturer, Whitman, and earned about ten dollars a week. There he grooved boxes for chocolates and the like. Saturday night usually found him at Fannie's house.

However, Jim didn't always keep his promises, especially with regard to drinking. One day in September he was down to Hanover with his cousin Bill. Jim

had been drinking all morning, and went in the bar to get more. He was in such a drunken condition even then, that liquor was refused him. But Jim would not be crossed; so he helped himself to a quart of Roc Gut Whiskey, put a dollar in the bottle's place, and left. They walked down the railroad track toward Rockland, and drank most of the bottle. On the way a man came along and asked Jim for a drink. Jim refused him. That same man, when he got to Rockland, told the police that there were two drunks down the track. Officer Cauflin was soon on the spot to arrest them. Bill ran; Jim was too drunk to run. There was a tussle, and the officer vainly tried to make Jim walk to the station. At last Officer Cauflin threw him over his shoulder and proceeded on his way. But Jim had a knife with a six inch blade in his pocket. It was one used to clean horses' hoofs, a "Farmer's Handy Tool." Jim managed to get that out, and, in a drunken rage, sent the blade anywhere he could. It penetrated the officer's wrist. He dropped Jim, looked at his wound, bound it up, then beat drunken Jim into submission, and made him walk to the station.

The Parker family was again driven to despair by the action of its black sheep. Father Parker hired a lawyer to fight for Jim. When the case came up in court, Jim was saved from a year in jail by the fact that the Rockland officer had arrested him ten yards over the Rockland line, in Hanover. The marks in the sand, left by the scuffle, proved the point of Jim's lawyer to be true.

On Saturday night, October 20, 1900, Jim went to Fannie's house, as usual. Mrs. Belbin, Fannie's mother, was a fine singer. She helped to entertain. After they had talked and exchanged the news, they stood around the organ and sang hymns. Jim reached home that night about nine o'clock.

On Sunday night, October 21, 1900, Jim met another girl. The Roman poet Horace said that woman was always a fickle and changeable creature. He might have said exactly the same for man. For no sooner had Jim laid eyes on that snappy blue-eyed, rosy-cheeked maiden, than he forgot his Fannie and became infatuated with Miss Hattie Mowry, who stood there in the Parker parlor, with her dark curls hanging down over her shoulders.

It had happened this way: Hattie was nearing the Parker home, when two young men approached, and threw insulting remarks at her. She was with Lottie Parker at the time — they were friends — and when they entered Lottie's house, and told the story to Jim, he heroically hastened to the street to get those "bums." He was indeed angry, and would have given them a drubbing if he had caught them. But they were nowhere to be found. He returned home to converse with Hattie, whom he had seen as a child many years before. What a beauty she had turned out to be! Jim looked at her, and his heart went bang, bang, bang against his ribs.

Now Miss Hattie Mowry had been unfortunate in life. Her father had come from the town of Smith-

field, Rhode Island, famous for its great number of Mowry families. Her mother and father had quarrelled and separated. Hattie went to live with her grandmother in Whitman. She was never allowed to dance, and had never gone to a "show" in her life. It was while she lived there that Jim had seen her as a little girl. Afterwards, Hattie was entered at the Little Wanderers' Home in Reading, Mass., where she attended the Industrial School. The night that Jim met her, however, she had found work in the home of M. F. Ellis, manufacturer of bags, twine, and other grocers' supplies. That Sunday night she was visiting friends in Whitman. That was how Jim happened to see her.

It was about seven o'clock. Jim was due at Fannie Belbin's house. Instead, he asked Hattie to go for a walk with him.

"All right! I'm willing," replied Hattie.

They walked around town, Jim talking, laughing and joking all the while. He told her of his career as a sailor — the places he'd been and the things he'd seen. He told her of the shipwreck. She was interested; he was indeed interesting. Finally, according to the custom of all generations, they talked of love. Jim came out in an open confession that he loved her, and wished to marry her.

Wisely and tactfully, Hattie Mowry gave Jim this reply, "I'll think about it."

But when they got home, it was after ten o'clock. What a late hour for young people to have been out to-

gether! So late was it that the last car for Brockton had left Whitman. Jim very heroically offered to hire a horse and buggy at the stable to take her back to the Ellis home. However, Jim's sisters persuaded her to stay at the Parker home over night. Which she did.

The next morning Jim got up and went to work as usual, at seven. Hattie Mowry, an hour before, had taken a trolley car for Brockton. But when she reached the home where she cared for three children, for some reason the authorities scolded her and told her she would have to leave. When Jim came home at noon for dinner, he found Hattie there, and heard her story. Mrs. Parker had sent Hattie over to Mrs. Mann, a member of the Salvation Army, to see about work. Mrs. Mann had plenty of work, but no money to pay for it. Jim, on learning that fact, went over and made this agreement with Mrs. Mann: that she hire Hattie, pay her \$2.50 a week for her work; and he would pay Mrs. Mann \$3.50 a week to care for Hattie, and also the \$2.50 a week with which she was to pay Hattie. Such a generous offer could not be refused, either by Mrs. Mann or Hattie Mowry. And although Hattie knew nothing of the arrangements, she took the new position, which paid her \$1 more a week than did her former position. She had brought her belongings from Brockton, and was soon settled at Mrs. Mann's home.

That night, Monday, October 22, Hattie and Jim went to the Salvation Army meeting together, after which they took a walk. They were happy in each

other's company, but they did not talk of love. The following night Hattie went to the Salvation Army officers' home, at Whitman; Jim visited Fannie Belbin.

Thursday night, when Jim came home from work his father said to him:

"Well, Jim, I hear you're going to get married."

"Who to?" asked Jim.

"To Hattie Mowry," replied Mr. Parker.

"I could do worse than that," said Jim, rather unconcerned.

"I'd like to see you get married without my consent," roared the father, his anger roused. "I'll give you the best wedding present of anybody if you can get married without my consent! You must remember that you are under age!"

"I ain't asked her yet," he said — which was a lie, "but if she'll have me, I'll get married all right!"

The elder got good and proper mad, but Jim boldly sassed him back. He left the house more determined than before to make Hattie Mowry his wife. That was Thursday evening, October 25. He immediately left for Mrs. Mann's house, and when he arrived, asked Hattie if she would like to go to a show. She had never been to one before. But yes, she would go to one with him.

Hardly was Hattie out of the house before Jim said: "Hattie, don't you think that you'd be better off if you got married? Nobody will be bossing you around; you'll be happier," and so forth. Jim named over in order the advantages of married life. After his little oration, he asked her again.

"I'd just as soon," was all she replied.

When he asked her if she liked him well enough, she said she did.

Jim's next move was to get Joe Porter, a fellow-worker in the mill with him, to go as a witness. Then they went to Brockton for a license. But no, they could not. Next they went to Rockland, where they found the town clerk's office closed. Nothing daunted, the three went to his home. He was preparing for bed, but he asked what he could do for them.

"I'm a sailor," said Jim. "I have to go off on my ship to-morrow, and wish to marry this girl."

And, with a few more lies, Jim persuaded the clerk to go down to his office — not, however, until he had talked a lot about how the younger generation was going mad.

"Are you living in Rockland at the present time?" he asked Jim.

"Yes," said Jim. He considered that even half an hour's residence was enough.

"Does the girl live in Rockland at the present time?"

Again Jim answered, "Yes."

"What is she doing?" came the inquiry from the town clerk.

"Housework," replied Jim.

"Are her parents living?"

"No; they are all dead," said Jim, believing that he was telling the truth.

"Are your parents living?"

"Yes," was Jim's truthful reply.

"All right," decided the town clerk as he filled out the papers.

Triumphantly the trio hurried to the home of the Baptist minister. He, too, was preparing to retire. As he came to the door he was fixing his necktie — Jim saw him through the glass in the window.

When he found their purpose, he looked at Jim, then he looked at Hattie. He shook his head and said:

"You'll have to have some of the girl's relations here to represent her. I think she's too young to be marrying without their consent."

When Jim found that he could not be married there, he found out where the Congregational minister lived. Then, cursing the man who even for a fat fee would not perform a ceremony which he felt in his heart would be sin for them, Jim left with this sentence:

"I'll get married in spite of you, you bald-headed ——— of a Baptist minister!"

They hastened to the house of the Congregational minister; but from the open front door, heard one side of a telephone conversation. Jim had forgotten the telephone, so little used, even then.

"You say the girl is too young? — You say you wouldn't marry them? — He swore at you?" These were some of the phrases Jim caught as he listened.

Then the minister, rather trembling, came to the door.

"What can I do for you?" he inquired.

"You can't do a d——n thing. I came here to get married, but now that bald-headed ——— ——— ———"

has thrown the monkey wrench into the spokes. I'll get married in spite of you!"

The astonished Congregational minister closed the door. The young people laughed in spite of their anxiety.

It was about eleven o'clock when Hattie and Jim reached Mrs. Mann's house. When they were let in, Mrs. Mann inquired: "Show was pretty late, wasn't it? What was the play, Hattie?"

"The Runaway Girl," replied Hattie. And then, passing the marriage license to Mrs. Mann, added brightly, "Here's the program. Want to read it?"

Mrs. Mann was confounded at what she read. However, as well as she knew that hasty marriages many times meant years of regret, she seemed rather pleased that such an event had entered her life. After she had learned all the happenings of the evening, Jim told Mrs. Mann to lengthen Hattie's skirts, to do up her hair, and to make her look about ten years older. With laughter, Jim went home.

The next morning he got up as usual to go to work. In his old clothes he left the house, but when he reached Obid Ellis's Clothing Store, he bought a new suit. Immaculately attired, he met Hattie there in front of the store a little after seven. That time, with Aaron Hayford as a witness, they took a trolley car to East Bridgewater. About eight o'clock, they awakened a retired minister, who came down stairs in his bath robe. After he had examined the marriage license, and the two candidates, he married them. His daughter, his

housekeeper, and Aaron Hayford acted as witnesses.

"How much?" asked Jim, when the ceremony was done.

"The law allows me a dollar," said the minister.

Jim gave him two dollars and a half, but the kind-hearted minister returned a dollar, and gave him his marriage book. The bride and groom then left for Whitman, and arrived at the Parker home at nine o'clock. They both went in the front room, where a mystified mother awaited the astonishing news.

"You can tell the old man I'm married in spite of him," said Jim, showing his mother the marriage certificate.

The mother said nothing, but sat down in the nearest chair and cried bitterly. At this, the new Mrs. Parker advanced toward her, and throwing her arms around her asked in a soothing way:

"Don't you want me for a daughter-in-law?"

"It isn't that, Hattie," explained the mother between sobs. "You don't realize the man you've married. You don't know how headstrong he is. I'm crying for you." She sobbed all the more, and exclaimed, "Why, he's a confirmed drunkard! God help him! Why didn't you tell me?"

"I know he drinks," said Hattie. "But he promised me he wouldn't any more."

Again the mother spoke.

"I hope it will be for the best."

Then said Hattie:

"I know I'll be better off married than knocking around the world."

How little Hattie really knew!

They then went to Mrs. Mann's, and arrangements were made whereby Mrs. Mann was to give both of them board and room for eight dollars a week. Although Jim's pay was only nine dollars a week at the time, he made a good deal more by gambling and playing poker. After a few minutes at Mrs. Mann's, he went to work at the factory.

When Jim's father came home from work, and his wife told him of his son's marriage, he immediately grew ill, and could not go to work that afternoon. He hated to have anything put over on him. He also knew that a hell on earth was in store for that sweet, blue-eyed Hattie Mowry Parker.

That night at seven there was a surprise party for Jim. About ten couples came and made merry until about ten o'clock. Mr. and Mrs. Parker were about to retire, when they discovered a bed full of long, sharp thorns, which their friends had prepared for them. How it typified the thorny way that was before them!

Jim arose at six the next morning and went to work. His father did not go to work that day, for he was still sick. He did, however, visit a lawyer, to see if the marriage could be dissolved—for the girl's sake. The lawyer replied in the negative, but said that Parker could have his wayward son put in jail if he wished. Of course, the father did not want to do that.

Now the senior Mr. Parker had heard that even

under the new arrangement with Mrs. Mann, that lady had asked Hattie Parker, his daughter-in-law, to work around the house. This made the father angry, so he saw Hattie and told her to get an express wagon and bring her belongings over to his house. He even told Mr. Charlie Mann:

"She's my daughter now, and she won't be slaving for nobody."

Hattie was delighted with the invitation to live with her father-in-law. So she immediately went down to the factory where Jim was working and told him she had changed her boarding place.

Jim thought to himself that his new wife was taking the reins of government in her own hands too soon after the marriage.

"Where is it?" he said hastily.

"Over to your dad's," came the reply. Then she told him all about it. Jim seemed not to care.

When he came to his home that night the first thing he said to his father was:

"Well, dad, have you got the wedding present yet?"

"I'll present you!" replied the parent. With that he put on his hat and left, knowing that if he remained in the house with such a pig-headed son, he'd surely fight with him.

The next day the father went to work for the first time since his son's marriage. The news of the affair spread through the community, and many a tear was shed for the poor bride. No one was more shocked than Fannie Belbin, who had helped keep Jim

straight for some time, and who had great hopes for him. However, that lucky one was not unhappy long; her winsome personality and her godly ways won for her a Baptist minister, whom she later married.

Jim and his wife had hardly been at the father's house for two weeks, when the two families quarrelled. It was hard enough for one family to get along peaceably, to say nothing of two. Jim, before his marriage, had consumed in drink all save \$50 of his bank account, and so depended entirely upon his earnings in the factory and his winnings from gambling. They had not stayed long at the Whitman House, where they moved soon after the quarrel, when Hattie began to discover the kind of a man she had married. He could not keep his word, for he started in drinking again. He got intoxicated now and then and barely kept out of serious trouble. They made their home at the Whitman House for about a month, and then moved to a house on Temple Street, where they went to housekeeping for themselves for the first time. Their furniture was all new, and cost Jim about \$200.

For a while Jim and his wife did fairly well. A party of decent young people was organized, some from the church. They had collected among themselves \$5.98 and bought an arm chair, at Mr. Holbrook's store, for the newly married couple. They had arranged for all kinds of refreshments — cake, ice cream, and candy. They had even hired Bill Carey for \$2 to play his fiddle for dancing.

Among those who came were: Jack Gleason, Jack

Wiers, Nellie Meigs (organist at the Baptist Church), Frank O'Brien, Lawrence O'Brien, Abner Weldern, Walter Powers, Bink Powers, and Annie and Grace Powers. It was a real wedding surprise, and would have turned out well, had not Jim and two or three others found whiskey to drink. When a fight came on, Jim threw out the leaders. He ought to have remained out himself. There was confusion, and the party broke up before they even had a dance or a nibble to eat. Everybody seemed disgusted about the affair, and Gertie, Jim's sister, spoke truly when she said:

"Jim breaks up everything — we can't have any good times."

CHAPTER VI

TROUBLES OF A DRUNKARD

One day in the following spring, Jim gave his wife Hattie five dollars to send for her mother. By that time Jim had found out all about his "in-laws." Hattie's father and mother had got to drinking even while Hattie was a baby. When the girl was nine years old, she was taken into the home of her grandmother at Whitman, who took care of her until she was fifteen. Then she went to The Little Wanderers' Home, where she stayed until she came to Brockton to work, met Jim at Whitman, and married him. Meanwhile, her mother and father, alcohol addicts, had been divorced. Mrs. Mowry had sent a pitiful letter to her daughter, telling how she yearned to once again view her child whom she had not seen for eight years. That was why Jim so willingly, in spite of himself, had written:

"Dear Ma: Come on up to see us."

He enclosed five dollars to pay his mother-in-law's car fare from Apponaug, Rhode Island.

It was not long before Mrs. Mowry arrived in Whitman, with trunk and all. Everything went well for two or three days, until two characters crashed. One character, Mother Mowry, realizing that Jim was ca-

pable, able to make good money when he wanted to, and generous in his heart, suggested that Jim send for her other three children, care for and educate them. That roused Jim's Irish, Scotch and English temper. He emphatically told his mother-in-law that he hadn't married the whole d——n family. To which the mother-in-law replied:

"My daughter married a pretty poor stick!"

In two or three more days, the situation grew unbearable, so Jim, who felt that he ought to be boss of his own home, ordered her to pack up and get out. She went immediately, fearing more than loving her son-in-law. But she went in such a hurry that she forgot all about her trunk. When Jim came home that night and found it there, he threw it down stairs. It broke, and the clothes were strewn everywhere. Finally Hattie repacked her mother's things, and an expressman roped up the trunk and had it sent to Ap-ponaug.

Now Hattie, by that time, had sided in with her mother. She knew what circumstances her family was in, and considered it Jim's duty to help in the support of her poor mother, brothers and sister. So she informed her husband that if he would not take in her family, she would leave. She might as well have told it to a stone wall. Jim would not listen to her, but told her to "go to it."

The next day Jim told his wife that he would order a sirloin steak to be delivered at the house, and wanted it fried for his dinner. When he came home he found

his possessions all packed up and the curtains down. His sirloin steak was in an old pie plate. Beside it was a fork with one prong and a tin ice cream spoon. Evidently his wife had decided to leave, but had also decided to take the silverware and other valuable furnishings with her. Jim cursed; finally his trembling wife brought out some silverware. He then told her that she would either have to get the curtains up and things put back in order by night or else get out. If she left, though, Jim told her something terrible would happen. As soon as Jim went back to Atwood's, Mrs. Parker took the silverware and curtains over to her sister-in-law's house. The relative gladly received her, for no one at that time was on good terms with Jim.

When Jim came home that night the lady upstairs gave him the keys to his house, saying that his wife had gone to Apponaug, R. I. The trunks were gone, and with them the curtains and silverware. Jim stamped around the house in a devilish fashion, swearing fiercely. He then hastened to the express office, where he purchased one quart of John Lyon's Rum, and one quart of John Lyon's Whiskey. At his home, again, he drank first from one bottle, and then from the other. He stamped around the house in mad-man fashion. Finally, when most of his liquor had been consumed, he hastened to the corners. At the Post Office he told the men that there was going to be an auction. When they inquired:

"Well, who's going to be the auctioneer?" Jim replied:

"I am!"

Six or seven interested men came home with Jim, and it was not long before they were going away with their spoil, which a drunken husband was almost giving away. Chairs, a fine parlor suite, dining furniture, pictures on the wall, new carpets, a bed, a bedroom suite, a sideboard table, a stove, and a kitchen table — enough new furniture to equip their four rooms — all was auctioned off for a grand total of \$7.50. The men hurried off with their booty as quickly as they could.

Then, after the wicked deed was done, and Jim was counting up his money, a little girl came over from the house next door and informed the astonished husband that his wife was over at Gertie's house. That bit of information made Jim angrier. He hastened to Gertie's house and knocked loudly at the door. Gertie opened it and Jim demanded:

"I want to see Hattie."

"You can't see her," said Gertie.

"I want to see her," repeated Jim. "I've got some money for her."

When Hattie heard the mention of money, she came near the door, but not near enough for Jim to reach her. Jim threw the \$7.50 at her, saying:

"Now beat it to your mother's — and beat it quick!"

That night a wife cried for hours. That night a husband drank and caroused. The next day he threw up his job at which he was then making \$18 a week, drew all his money out of the bank, and bought booze.

He made arrangements to live at the Whitman House, across the street from Gertie's. Lucy Brown was chambermaid at the Whitman House, and whenever he could, Jim stood near her when she was near the window. For very likely his own wife Hattie would be watching from across the way. Although he never went as far as to kiss Lucy Brown, two or three times he tripped her in front of the window, and sat her in his lap. That was the method by which Jim proceeded to win back his wife Hattie. Lucy pardoned the liberties because she wished to help reconcile the pair.

One night, about two weeks after the auction, Jim saw his sister Gertie and his wife Hattie leaving their home for the Salvation Army meeting. The policy of the Salvation Army was to hold an open air meeting at about 7:30 P. M., and then at 8 P. M. to hold an indoor meeting. An idea came into Jim's head — he'd make Hattie jealous. So what did he do but invite Lucy to go to the Salvation Army meeting with him — which Lucy did. There were thirty to forty people inside the hall. The meeting began with the singing of hymns. Hattie happened to turn around, and she saw Lucy with Jim. She left the meeting immediately. Jim was getting ready to leave when he saw her returning. Hattie had purchased a bag full of hard round candy, which she passed to three or four girls around her. Jim was sitting with Lucy, three or four rows behind Gertie. Then, at a signal, the girls in front pelted the two in back. One ball hit Lucy on

the nose. It hurt her nose less than her feelings. Another ball went high above its mark and clanked against the iron stove in the middle of the room. The rest fell to the floor, making a racket.

"You'll have to stop that!" interrupted the leader of the meeting.

"I'll show them," spoke up Lucy, rising, "I'm not going to be made a fool of!"

With that she made a dash for Hattie. The meeting was in an uproar. Officials, however, soon quieted the fracas by force, and once again order was restored.

Jim and Lucy left for the Whitman House. He persuaded her that the candy pills were meant for him, and left her quiet at the hotel. But when he stepped outside, Hattie came running up. She was in tears.

"Lucy isn't going to have you, Jim! You're my husband!" With that, the two "made up."

Jim, in the two weeks he had been separated from Hattie, had spent most of his money. He then hired a room at Mrs. Mann's, where they stayed for a week. Jim kept drinking all this time, but did not get drunk.

There was a good deal of talk around town about Mr. and Mrs. James Parker's affairs. So both decided to visit Mrs. Mowry, Hattie's mother, who was taking care of a Civil War veteran by the name of Watson, in Apponaug. Jim and his mother-in-law were reconciled, and matters went along smoothly. Jim quit drinking for days, principally because there

were no saloons near the house where he was staying.

After they had been there a short while, a certain Mr. Swanson came to the house and offered Jim a job, firing a donkey engine in the woods where they were cutting logs and sawing them into boards. Jim accepted the position as a pastime, and for pocket money was to receive \$10.50 a week.

Jim worked for two weeks without taking a single drink of alcoholics. Everything was going fine; for when Jim was sober he was happy, generous, loving, and easy to get along with. It did not take him long to learn how to fire the donkey engine. He had to keep enough wood in the fire, and keep the barrel beside the boiler full of water, for if the water gave out the boiler would explode. He drew the liquid from a nearby stream. Jim was a good worker, and his Swede boss, Swanson, was well pleased with him. He was so pleased, in fact, that the Saturday afternoon which finished the second week for Jim, he made the fatal mistake of bringing on a gallon of hard cider. The other three workers each drank a glass full of it. But Jim drank five glasses. It awoke the old appetite. Jim wanted more, and would have taken more had not the other three drunk what little was left.

The little seven year old son of Swanson wandered toward the engine. Jim showed him a silver dollar.

"Would you like that?" he inquired.

"Sure!" exclaimed the boy.

"Well, you can have it if you go and get this jug full of cider and bring it back so your dad won't see it."

The boy disappeared with the jug. He reappeared in about ten minutes, and without letting his father or the other men know, sneaked it to Jim. The boy took the dollar, and laughed to himself when he thought how easily he had earned it. Jim consumed the whole jug. In a drunken condition he kept adding green slabs to the fire, but he forgot to put water in the boiler. In fifteen or twenty minutes the water was all gone and the boiler began to go thump, thump, thump! Swanson, who was running the saw while the other two men rolled the logs up, heard the thumping of the engine and hurried to see what was the matter. When he arrived, the roaring fire, supposed to keep up only a few pounds of steam by the gage, was going at a hitherto unknown rate. The engine continued to thump, thump, thump—but faster than before.

“Run boys!” he hollered. “There’s no water in the boiler!”

He had seen Jim in his drunken condition, and, taking him upon his shoulders, hastened away as fast as he could. He was hardly out of the way when a terrible roar occurred. The boiler went to bits; heavy logs sailed into the air like chips, and some of those timbers lodged in nearby trees. At Mr. Watson’s home, a mile away, Mrs. Parker heard the noise and exclaimed:

“Jim’s blowed up the boiler!”

The explosion so shook the earth that for miles away people knew something unnatural had happened.

The shock was so great that it brought Jim to his senses. He ran just as fast as he could away from the scene, and never returned to collect his two weeks' pay from the big Swede. Cider cost Jim \$21 and ended his career as an engineer.

It was in the early part of June that the engine exploded. The following day, Sunday, Jim happened to notice in an advertising column of the *Providence Journal*,

"Wanted: a second hand to help a baker, at Williams' bakery in Apponaug. Apply to the manager."

Sunday night Jim went down to see the manager, who said that the position paid eight dollars a week and board. The manager inquired, "Did you ever work in a bakery before?"

"Yes," replied Jim.

"Knead bread?"

"Yes," came the answer.

"Make cakes?"

"Sure."

"All right. I'll give you a week's trial. Show up to-morrow morning at six o'clock."

Jim was glad to get the job, because there was a bar-room near the bakery, and he could drink all he wanted. He didn't know how to make cake, but he trusted that he would get along all right. The next morning he arrived at the bakery at six o'clock, and met another big Swedish gentleman by the name of Lawson, who had been the baker there for eight years. Jim was to act as assistant to him.

"You bane my new helper?" he inquired.

"Sure! I bane your new helper," replied Jim, mimicking his boss.

"You ever work in bake shop before?" again inquired Lawson.

"Sure!" said Jim.

"Well, knead bread now," ordered the chief.

"We need a can of beer more," replied Jim. "Don't you drink?"

"I bane drink. You bane buy?" queried Lawson.

"Yes," said Jim, who had a large bank roll with him at the time. Jim left the shop, and the baker commenced to knead the dough. At a hotel across the street Jim drank a "couple of shots" of whiskey himself, taking as much time as he could. Leisurely he ordered a can of beer, and then went back to the bakery. By that time the bread was all kneaded, and Jim did not have to put in a minute's labor on that. The next job was to grease the pans, which he did quickly and well. After that, Lawson wanted a quart of eggs broken, but Jim had to be on his guard to separate the fresh from the stale eggs. Jim did that job all right. Between jobs, however, he went over again to the bar across the way and got more beer. When the supply ran out, he replenished his needs this third time with a half pint of whiskey for himself, and another for the baker. In gratitude for the refreshments, the baker did about all of the work. Late in the morning the manager stuck his head through the door and said, "Well, Lawson, what do you think of your new helper?"

"He bane one d—n fine good helper," replied Lawson, "Best I had for long while."

"I'm glad of that. I'm glad you're suited," said the boss, who noticed Jim hurrying hither and thither all the time, doing little odd jobs around the kitchen.

The week wore on. Jim furnished drinks continually, for whenever Mr. Williams, the manager, left the shop, Jim would steal across the street and get a supply of drinks. The baker did most of the work, and never labored harder in all his life. During the week Jim spent about \$20 for booze. Whenever the boss came around, he would take out an old pan and grease it or clean it — to appear busy.

Saturday morning Mr. Williams had an order for a large wedding cake. He said he would make it himself, and asked Jim to break up a quart of eggs for the cake. Jim was half drunk. He hurried so that he forgot to separate the whites from the yolks; he also did not notice that several stale eggs were in the mixture. He gave Mr. Williams the dipper of eggs, who, unsuspecting, immediately put them in his cake, and from thence into the oven. A few minutes later he opened the oven door to see how it was coming along. An unpleasant odor filled his nose and made him step back in haste. All three left the room. Jim took his hat on the way out, and did not return to get chastised by the baker.

Jim hastened home to his wife, and told her of the incident. She was disgusted, and truthfully said:

"You're always getting into trouble — you never can hold a job."

After supper that night she coaxed him to go down to the bakery to collect his pay. Jim agreed to, but told her that if she went into the shop and could get the money, she could have it. They walked down to the town — the distance of about a mile and a half. Mr. Williams came to the door and spoke to Jim:

"If I had got hold of you in the morning, I'd have kicked you 'till sunset. But now I have to laugh about it. Old man Lawson has done more work this week than any week in eight years." He further added that Lawson wanted him to continue with the job. Jim refused, however.

All during the week, in his half drunken condition, Jim had been ugly at home. He snarled like a dog no matter what happened. The affair at the bakery brought on a quarrel with Mrs. Parker; the next day in order to make up with her, Jim offered to take her to Crescent Park.

Mrs. Parker accepted the invitation, and soon they had ridden on the trolley cars to that amusement center, well known to natives of Rhode Island. Then came a disagreement. Mrs. Parker wanted to go on the roller coasters — Mr. Parker didn't. He gave his wife twenty-five cents for five rides. He promised to wait on the bench beside the coasters. She left him sitting there, and departed with her mind at rest. However, no sooner had she left him for her first ride, when Jim left for the barroom nearby. He intended to drink as much as he could in the little time he had. At that cheap barroom, both men and women were

allowed to stand together at the bar. When Jim got there, a large crowd was squandering money. Jim elbowed up next to a French woman, and drank quite a few "shots" of whiskey. Shortly he was drunk.

Although Jim was a heavy drinker, his morals were good. When he was drunk, the French woman made approaches, and invited him to Providence. Jim, thinking all the time the stranger was his wife, accepted the invitation. They boarded a car and were soon on their way. Suddenly Jim came back to consciousness.

"Where's Hattie?" he demanded of his companion.

"What do you mean?" asked the woman, somewhat perplexed.

"Why, my wife!" gasped Jim.

The woman then told Jim how she met him at Crescent Park in the barroom; that they had struck up an acquaintance, and that he had promised to go home with her.

"Where are we?" asked Jim.

"We're nearly at Providence," replied his companion.

Just then the car stopped at one of the way stations.

"Here's where I get off and take another car back," said Jim, leaving in a hurry. The woman was angry, of course; so was Jim, for that matter.

In the meantime Mrs. Parker had taken two or three rides on the roller coaster. But she felt uneasy for her husband, and saving the rest of her money, left to search for him. All over the park she searched for

him — he was nowhere to be found. The poor little woman burst into tears. A kind policeman, seeing her in agony, asked what the trouble was. She confided in him the whole story; he advised her to go home. The fare from Crescent Park to Apponaug was ten cents. She had that amount, and went home as quickly as she could, after the policeman had promised to send her husband home if he saw him.

When Jim reached the Park, his wife had just left. He searched for her as she had searched for him; and, in his distress, inquired of a policeman if he had seen a pretty little lady looking for her husband. Yes, he had, and he told him she had gone home. Jim left immediately for home — and when he got there his wife gave him a terrible scolding, his mother-in-law gave him a terrible scolding, and Mr. Watson gave him a terrible scolding.

Now a scolding never did Jim any good. But three scoldings from three different people always did him harm. Those three scoldings along with the alcohol in his system, made Jim Parker as angry as a hornet. What did he do but go out on the front lawn and lay down on the grass, sulking like a baby. Now Mr. Watson didn't want a drunken man lying on his front lawn. He resurrected an old revolver and came out of the house to the place where Jim lay. Brandishing his weapon, he exclaimed:

"If you don't come in I'll shoot you. I'll not have you out here for people going by to see — to disgrace me."

Jim jumped up, made a grab for the pistol, tusseled with his opponent — who was older and weaker than himself — and finally secured possession of the weapon.

“Now beat it or I’ll shoot you!” shouted Jim triumphantly. Mr. Watson ran around the house with Jim hot on his trail. They had made about five round-trips, when Mr. Watson remembered that the gun was not loaded. With that recollection he stopped, and all out of breath, exclaimed:

“You’ll have to get out of my house and stay out!”

“I’m already out and I’m not going in!” replied Jim. He proceeded to tell his host what he thought of him.

Finally, when the shouting had died, Jim gave Mr. Watson the pistol, and they both went into the house. For the two or three days preceding that affair, Jim had been planning to return to Whitman. The quarrel, of which he had been the cause, gave him an excuse to leave. So he packed up his goods and went to Whitman, by way of Providence and Brockton.

Jim’s parents were glad to see him. For indeed, to see a man of his character alive, and to see him continue to live, was nearly a miracle. They had not heard from him since he had left Whitman, and they gladly received him into their home. He planned to get rooms elsewhere, for he knew that Hattie would soon be with him again.

Jim did have his good points. There was no question about that. He could work hard when he was sober, and he was a good provider. It did not take

him long to find work; this time he determined to learn a trade, and went to work at Waterman & Jenkins counter and box-toe shoeshop.

He had hardly been in Whitman a week, when he received word from Hattie that her mother, while feeding the horse in the barn, had fallen through the hay, broken her leg, and was in the hospital. Hattie longed for Jim, and wanted to come back to Whitman.

Jim hastened to Apponaug. When he came to Mr. Watson's house, he was greeted at the door by his mother-in-law, who had not been hurt in the least.

"What kind of a game are you putting up on me?" was Jim's first inquiry. Mrs. Mowry denied any knowledge of Hattie's plot. Then Hattie herself came to the door and explained that she had lied to him in order to get him to come and accompany her home. They left immediately for Whitman, where they soon took a house on Harvard Street. Jim was earning around \$12 a week, and had on hand a little money from former profits. They had been at their home on Harvard Street but two weeks, when the house became infested with red ants. The ants got into everything, and made life miserable for the Parkers. There was only one way to escape them, and that was to move. So they went to live down on Temple Street. They had purchased another load of furniture — this time on the instalment plan — \$10 down and \$1.50 a week thereafter until the bill was paid.

Affairs went on rather smoothly for about two months. Jim drank all the while, but not to excess.

And then, on the 30th day of August, 1902, just two minutes after midnight, Mrs. Parker brought forth her first child, a son. Jim's kind mother, always doing good deeds, acted as midwife, and cared for the baby, who was named Carleton Leslie — Carleton after Burt Carleton of Brockton, and Leslie after Leslie Titus of Trout Cove.

Jim Parker was a proud father, if there ever was a proud father. He told all his friends, and people about town could tell by his erect walking position that something very wonderful had happened.

About three days afterward, John Elliot, an acquaintance of Jim's, came over and asked him to celebrate the event. But Jim had no money to spend for booze at the time. John, however, had plenty of money, and would gladly treat Jim for the sake of celebrating. So Jim went into a "Blind Pig" (a barroom, run in a town or city where it was against the law to sell alcoholics, but where the lawbreakers would have their way) and bought some illicit stuff. But he forgot to give John back the change from the bill. He made many trips to many "Blind Pigs," acting as purchasing agent, but never giving back change to his friend.

They came to Washington Street, where Jim was given the last dollar to buy more drinks. Jim again went into a "Blind Pig" and bought more refreshments. But again, in his sub-normal condition, he forgot to hand back any change. John accused Jim of stealing his money, while Jim vigorously denied it.

They had come to Washington Street bridge, when John picked Jim up bodily and threw him down the bank. Jim rolled over and over until he came to the railroad track. When Jack, from above, looked down at him, he saw his face torn in pieces. Reaching his side, John found something the matter with Jim's shoulder. Repenting the act he had so hastily committed, he again picked Jim up bodily, but this time took him home. He opened the door of Jim's house, put him on the floor and said:

"Here, Jim's hurt. He fell."

Jim's mother saw her son's battered face, and bathed it in water until he came to his senses again. That night, however, a little wife, mother to a three-day-old baby, lay awake listening to a drunken husband talk in his sleep. He sang wild, fiendish songs, and had *delirium tremens*, so common to the drunkard.

It was during one of those periods of mental unrest that Jim had had a nightmare that he never forgot. In the *tremens* he saw a little green elephant sitting on his further bed post. The elephant started to grow and grow. It became so big that it filled the room, and soon its side was crushing against Jim's body. He felt his life being squeezed out and screamed in terror. Just then the elephant burst, as if it had been a balloon. But once again it sat — a little green form on Jim's bed post. It kept growing again, and, when it seemed as though its form was about to kill him, it burst again, and then went through the very same process time and again. That was just one night-

mare of many, for Jim was always troubled by snakes, phantoms and demons — so common to the drunkard. Uneasy lay the head that worshipped booze.

The morning after that celebration of his son's birth, Jim got up, put on his clothes, and found about \$8 of John Elliot's in his pockets. He went to Brockton where he was now earning from \$15 to \$18 a week in Pearly Barbour's¹ shoe shop, making box-toes. Jim had been made a boss, and had about twenty helpers under him. Pearly Barbour had been set up in business by his father, who was a very religious man and abhorred alcoholic liquors. He took great interest in the men who worked at his son's factory, and when he saw Jim coming in with a scratched face, he inquired:

"What happened to you, Jim?"

Now Jim knew of the elder Barbour's aversion to alcoholic drinks. And so he told his superior this story: "I went to step on an electric car, and the conductor started the car too soon. My foot caught, and dragged me along. That's how I got my face scratched up."

"That's just the way with those fellows," exclaimed Mr. Barbour. "They're too reckless. We'll have to teach them a lesson. I'll make out a note to my lawyer, and we'll sue them."

With that resolution he started to write a letter, but Jim remonstrated. He had to tell many lies to cover up his first one, and it took some time for him to dissuade Mr. Barbour from carrying out his threat.

¹ The young Pearly Barbour later became Mayor of Quincy, Mass.

When he went to work, he couldn't seem to do anything with one arm, so he confided to Mr. Hall, a manager at the factory, his previous day's affair. Mr. Hall looked at the shoulder, and found Jim's arm out of its socket.

"See if you can raise your arm," said Mr. Hall to Jim. "No, not that way; this way!" he added, taking hold of it and twisting it back into place. Jim could not go to work again for two weeks.

While in Brockton, Jim drank regularly, but rarely did he get drunk. He used to make a drink called "stretch" by mixing a pint of alcohol, which he bought at a drug store, with a pint of water. That concoction caused many a good man to stretch out in the gutter, or on somebody's front lawn.

Soon after the birth of her son, Mrs. Parker wished for a vacation, to get away from her husband, who loved liquor more than his wife or son. Jim promised his wife that she could visit her mother in Apponaug, but not immediately — for it was too soon after the birth of her child. But Mrs. Parker wanted to go at once.

One morning, about three weeks after Jim had gone back to work at Pearly Barbour's, he left \$5 with his wife for the milk man. When he reached home that night, he found the \$5 gone, and his wife gone too. She had left a note, saying, "I'm going to mother's anyway. You can pay the milk bill." For three days Jim kept bachelor's hall. The dirty plates were

stacked high, and although Jim intended to wash them, he never did.

The third day after his wife's departure, Jim received a telegram from Apponaug, saying, "Come immediately. Hattie is dying." Jim was at Barbour's factory at the time. He showed the message to Mr. Barbour, who gave him \$20 and told him to go to his wife. He immediately hastened to Apponaug. Mrs. Parker had had a shock.

Evidently the ride had shaken her nerves, and the worry for her baby, added to the worry for a drunkard husband, had caused the breakdown. Mrs. Mowry, Hattie's mother, had married Mr. Watson, for whom she had been keeping house. She advised Jim to take his wife and baby home; she did not wish to have the responsibility herself. She had not forgotten her various quarrels with her son-in-law. So Mr. and Mrs. Parker took the baby to Brockton, where Jim's parents were then living. During the ride on the trolley car the baby cried louder and longer than it had ever cried before. Jim's father soon found out the reason, for Mrs. Watson had accidentally stuck a safety pin through the flesh of the little fellow's neck, and had fastened it.

Meanwhile Hattie's left side became paralyzed. A doctor was summoned. For two weeks he came regularly. She nearly died. Jim thought that more ought to be done for her. He summoned a then famous Brockton specialist — Dr. Stall — whose first visit cost Jim \$25, in return for which his wife received a bottle of red medicine. She seemed to improve on

this medicine, which, when used up, was replaced by Dr. Stall (for another fee) with a bottle of yellow medicine. Mrs. Parker seemed to grow worse with the second variety, but when her strength was waning, Dr. Stall would bring on another bottle of red medicine. The poor mother did not seem to sleep much at night, and, naturally, she could not care for her baby. But Jim looked out for wee Carleton, gave him his bottle of milk, and when he cried, would patiently rock him to sleep. Jim loved his baby.

Doctor's bills ran high, and Jim looked for a better paying job. About three weeks after his wife's shock, Jim talked with the man who had been made boss at the Commonwealth in Whitman. He told Jim that most any time he was liable to go off on a drunk — and, when he did, he would like Jim to have his job. One Monday, having been warned beforehand that his friend was going to carry out his threat, Jim went to the Commonwealth at Whitman and interviewed Mr. Mansfield, the manager. Jim told him that the former boss was going on a drunk, but had sent him to take the job.

"The man himself will appear and hand in his resignation this morning," Jim added.

"Well, I'm not a bit surprised," said Mr. Mansfield, "because I heard after I hired him that he was that kind of a man. I wouldn't have hired him, though, if I had known at the time that he drank."

"I can handle the job and I'd like to get it," said Jim.

"Do you think you can get the right help to carry the thing through?" inquired Mr. Mansfield.

"Yes, I know where I can get everybody I need," said Jim.

"All right; if he gives up the job, I'll hire you!" replied the manager.

Mr. Hadley, the former boss, did come in that very morning, and told Mr. Mansfield that he was through with the job. Then Jim, who was immediately given the position, played a rather discourteous trick on his friend, Pearly Barbour. Jim hired a girl from his factory to do the sorting of the box-toes. He hired one man to do the skiving and splitting, and three other men to do the scouring. For more money, Jim had drawn all these from the factory of Pearly Barbour. Jim paid fifteen cents a hundred for scouring, ten cents a hundred for splitting and skiving. That allowed Jim ten cents for each hundred his helpers did. His earnings rose to \$90 or \$100 a week. He was well able to meet all his family expenses.

For eight weeks Hattie Parker lay sick at her mother-in-law's home. Then Jim had her removed to Mrs. Elliot's, in Rockland. Jim commuted every day to his work. All that time Mrs. Parker would have red medicine, then yellow medicine — the one made her better, the other made her worse. Mrs. Elliot soon became convinced that this Dr. Stall was playing a trick. So she and Jim bought an extra bottle of the red medicine — but didn't use it. Jim had been making three trips a week to the doctor's office. One day, when his suspicions got the best of him, he stepped in to see Dr. Stall.

"How's your wife, all right?" spoke up the doctor.

"She's fine!" said Jim.

"What?" exclaimed the doctor. He had recently given a bottle of yellow medicine to his patient. Jim informed the young doctor that he was a cur to gamble with a woman's health for a few lousy dollars.

"You owe me \$39, for which I'll send the bill," said the doctor as Jim was about to leave.

"No, I'll pay you now," said Jim, advancing toward the doctor.

With that he gave the unfortunate physician a severe trouncing. The doctor tried to defend himself, but it was of no use, for Jim was a hard fighter. For nearly five minutes Jim beat him, and finally rolled him up in the large art square rug in the center of the office. He then went through the waiting room, where several were seated to see the doctor.

"You'll find your nice doctor in there!" said Jim, pointing to the office. "I guess to-night he needs you more than you need him." And with that remark, Jim vacated, leaving the astonished patients to administer to their physician.

The following day there were articles in the Brockton papers about the famous specialist who had been given a beating in his own office. Within five weeks that same specialist, who had collected enormous fees from gullible patients, had been run out of town for practicing medicine without a license.

Hattie Parker stayed at Mrs. Elliot's in Rockland for five weeks, after which she was well enough to go

with Jim to Northville, where she rested for three more weeks. Then Hattie with her husband and child went to housekeeping again in Whitman.

While there Jim got acquainted with a family of Indians by the name of Globe, who had come down from their village about five miles from Bear River, Nova Scotia. Mr. and Mrs. Globe wove baskets which they sold to make a living. Their buxom daughter Lucy had worked in the stock room of a nearby factory as a shipper. However, she had not been in Whitman long before another Indian from down East had won her. They were married in the Roman Catholic Church, and planned a reception in the home of the bride's parents, at five o'clock following the wedding. Jim, well known to the family because he was boss in a shoe factory and because he was known to be a jolly fellow, was invited to the reception. For the occasion Mr. Parker had purchased a custom-made suit of steel gray with reddish stripes. The day of the wedding was a holiday for Jim, because the owners were taking inventory at the factory. Before Jim left his house, he took a few drinks of whiskey to put him in a jolly mood. Mr. Globe's house was so small that all the guests could not get in it. But Jim was immediately ushered through the crowd and asked to serve the drinks. There were whiskey, rum, brandy, and various wines. Jim was given instructions to fill the glasses and pass them around to the hundred-odd guests from the mill, who waited outside.

Inside the house the bride and groom were receiving their friends. Cakes, fruit, and chicken sandwiches were in abundance, all of which were hastily consumed along with cases of liquor. Jim ate a little and drank much, then went to his task of distributing the drinks to the men and women outside.

So he filled up seven glasses, put them on a tray, and went to the front door. Jim asked the men if they wanted a drink. They all did. Jim took up the first glass, flourished it in the air, said:

“Here’s to you.”

And then he drank it himself.

That he did until all the liquor on the tray had been consumed by himself, while the thirsty crowd outside began to murmur. This performance he repeated, and the onlookers began to wager how much the tanker could drink. They did see — for Jim drank almost four trays of the liquors. By that time he was drunk, and tried to flirt with the bride. He even went as far as to suggest that she elope with him. Jim was making a nuisance of himself, and the Globe family, who also had partaken freely of the alcoholics, did not feel in a mood to tolerate him.

So they dragged him out back of the house, and threw him into a pile of sawdust which adjoined Ben Atwood’s saw mill. The Indians knew that no one could see him there. Poor Jim’s head was immersed in the pile. That night it rained hard. That night a weeping wife stayed up until the morning waiting for her husband’s return. Often she had waited for him

when he was on gambling episodes. She did not even know he had gone to the Indian wedding.

The next morning Dave Porter asked Mrs. Parker where Jim was. He said he had been at the wedding. When Dave left, Mrs. Parker and Jim's mother, who happened to be visiting her at the time, hastened to Mr. Globe's home. They were directed to the shed, where they said they laid him to sleep when he had got so drunk the night before that he couldn't stand up.

It was about 7:30 A. M. when Mrs. Parker first caught a glimpse of her husband, whose head, during the night, had been completely covered with sawdust. Hattie screamed when she saw him, for it looked as though his head had been cut off.

"There's something wrong with Jim! I can't see his head!" she cried.

But Jim's mother consoled her. "Don't be frightened — he's all right."

Then they hauled him out and wiped off his face. Mrs. Parker hailed a friend, who was just returning from delivering a ton of coal. They hoisted him in the wagon, and drove about a mile to the Parker house. When they got him up stairs, Mrs. Parker, Jim's mother, took off his clothes and gave him a bath. He was covered with coal dust from head to foot. Jim came to just enough to murmur that he had been to an Indian wedding reception. He slept all that day, and the following night. The next day he went to work, but he was really in no condition to labor.

It was not long after that that Jim lost his job. Again the Parker family moved; this time to a farm on Cox's Corner in Hanover. Jim obtained employment at Pearly Barbour's in Brockton, where his earnings varied from \$15 to \$20 a week. However, he thought he'd run his farm on the side. So he plowed up a half-acre of greensward, and planted corn, beans, peas, turnips, and cucumbers. Jim really did not know much about farming, but in his bold and daring way he was willing to try anything. However, Jim didn't bother to break up the greensward — he was too lazy to do that, and beside, commuting to Brockton every week day left him little time to care for his garden. The vegetables grew up fine. So did the weeds. And many a nearby farmer broke forth into laughter at seeing Jim's garden. But that year there came a drought and many of the gardens around were smitten by the hot rays of the sun. But for some reason or other, Jim's crops were large. Perhaps the weeds sheltered the vegetables sufficiently to prevent their withering. Perhaps the ground was low and damp. At any rate, Jim out-farmed many a farmer.

Jim did little drinking while in Hanover. With his farm work he had little time for alcohol. His baby had grown to be a year old, and Jim became very fond of it. At his home he would walk him up and down the front room. He liked to toss him gently in the air, and the boy, in response, would da-da and coo-coo in babyish manner. Jim bought all manner of toys for him, with rattles and rocking horses. Jim was

proud to take him out in the baby carriage for a ride. It was the child which kept Jim somewhat more sober than he had been before.

The farm expedition of Jim's took up the spring, summer and fall of 1903. Along toward winter, the Parkers again moved to Brockton, where they purchased another load of furniture on the instalment plan and went to housekeeping on Tabor Avenue. Soon after they again moved to Hanover, and Jim opened a variety store at Hanover Four Corners. He sold tinware and odds and ends. However, he got into trouble when he put on his shelves sixteen pints of whiskey and rum; for there was "no license" in Hanover. So he sold out for \$5 and moved to Dorchester. That was in the early part of 1904.

In Dorchester Jim took charge of the box-toe department of the Columbia Counter Company, which was at that time being run by a retired Baptist minister. Jim had one boss above him who was an Italian. That man hired his own countrymen, most of whom could only say "me no speak English." While working there Jim lived on Greenwich Street.

On the morning of August 25 in the year 1904 at 5:45, another son was born in the Parker family. He was named Alfred Norman — Alfred from the father's middle name, and Norman from a cousin of Jim's. His eyes were quite dark in contrast to the blue eyes of his brother Carleton.

Not very long after, there was trouble in the factory

where Jim was working. Jim discovered that some of the new laborers had carelessly thrown away many pieces of leather. The Italian boss blamed Jim, who knew nothing of it until he had seen some of the men whom his superior had hired throw away leather toes, made imperfect by poor workmanship. In the argument that followed, the owner of the business — the retired Baptist minister — came in, reviewed the whole affair, and, to his consternation, found over \$2000 worth of leather thrown away. He fired all hands, but gave Jim \$50 above his pay for discovering the heap of leather.

About a month after that affair the Parkers again moved to Brockton, where they lived at the Brockton House on Montello Street. Inside of two weeks Jim had landed a job at the Pierce Box-Toe Company, where his earnings were about \$18 a week. Again he purchased a load of furniture on the instalment plan.

One day, Jim, in a drunken condition, went into the Brockton Public Market and ordered sixteen cream cakes. The clerk put them in a bag, gave them to Jim, and awaited the money. Thereupon Jim, who happened to have plenty of money with him at the time, withdrew from his pocket a five cent piece, and offered it to the astonished clerk.

"That's all they're worth," said Jim. "They're full of wind, anyway."

That happened on a Saturday night, and a crowd

was standing around to be waited on. The clerk refused Jim's request. Somehow, Jim got the idea that the clerk was trying to cheat him, and feeling rather insulted, he demanded an apology. More than that, he asked the bewildered man behind the counter to call all the other clerks of the market together and to apologize before them, to show the whole store that Jim Parker was no cheat.

To satisfy Jim, the clerk said he would do so. Instead, he called up the police station, and told them to come down and arrest Jim Parker, who was drunk. But when Jim heard the word "police," he snatched up his bag of cream cakes, left the nickel on the counter and hastened from the store as quickly as he could. He was about a mile away, and within a half block of his home, when the horse-driven patrol wagon overtook him. And while Mrs. Parker looked on from a window in her house, her husband was arrested, and taken to the police station. Hattie went directly down to see Mrs. William Parker, Jim's mother. The good wife then hastened to the police headquarters, and with her two children sat out all night on the steps of the police station. What a world of suffering — all on account of one drunken man!

When Jim woke the next morning in his cell, he found that all his pockets had been gone through by the police the night before. No smoking was allowed in the cells, which made Jim exceedingly angry. His wife and mother came in to see him that Sunday morning. Jim told them to bring him a good dinner, and also:

"Bring in some tobacco, and don't let the cops see it. Hide it in the food."

Hattie bought a boiled dinner at a nearby restaurant, and also a half of a mince pie, in which she had hidden a plug of B. L. tobacco by taking out the filling, putting in the tobacco, and then filling in around the edges with the mincemeat. The dinner passed inspection, and Jim had soon consumed his meal. When Mrs. Parker left, Jim was chewing vigorously on a wad of tobacco, and spewing on the floor. The guard that morning had gone to church — his clothes clearly showed that fact by their newness, and his shoes were highly polished. Jim, seeing him pace by the cells, called:

"Hey, come here a minute!"

From that very guard Jim had asked for tobacco some time before, and had been refused. When the guard was close to the cell door, Jim let drive a round of sputum and tobacco juice, which landed ker-plunk on one of the guard's shoes. The officer swore — but that didn't do any good, for Jim, too, was in an angry mood.

"Where the h—— did you get that?" he demanded of Jim.

"I got it all right," howled Jim. "I'll keep it, too. Let's see you come in here and get it!"

But the guard was not foolish enough to accept the challenge. However, after Jim had sobered down more, he felt better and made such a good friend of the guard that the very next morning that same officer lent

Jim his razor with which to shave, although this, too, was against the rules of the department. Jim had said that he had to go out on business, and wanted to look decent. Jim did make friends, even of his enemies, because in spite of his deviltry, all admired his nerve. On Monday morning, at ten o'clock, he was released after he had signed a paper in which he pleaded guilty, and paid a fine.

At this time Jim was employed as a salesman. He had left the Pierce Company, on account of drink, and had taken up selling a tin dipper, which he paid sixteen cents for and sold for twenty-five, which could be changed quickly into a water heater by setting it on a lamp chimney. It could be used as a tea strainer, clamp to fill a fruit jar, measuring cup, and so forth. Jim hawked his wares on the Brockton streets. He stood in front of factories at closing time, told his story to the outcoming workers, and sold his dippers as fast as he could hand them out and collect the money. But the thrill of being a salesman, like that of being a farmer, soon departed.

Fickle indeed was the mind of a drunkard, for again Jim sold out his furniture — this time for \$8 — and moved to Gold Street, South Boston. There he obtained work on the docks unloading lumber. He bought another load of furniture by persuading a merchant that he had a big check coming to him. Jim paid nothing down, but later, when money began to come in, paid for the furnishings on the instalment

plan. He then moved to Harrison Avenue, Roxbury, and for a time worked in a saw mill on Eustis Street, where he ran a saw and did bench work.

Then another change came. Jim got a job as fitter at the Derby Desk Company, West Somerville, starting at \$10.50 a week. Inside of three months he was a boss. In six months more, due to his expertness and natural ability, he was made night boss over 200 people, at \$26 a week.

After a few weeks, Jim took to drinking again. At the same time his eyes and lungs were becoming irritated from the sawdust of the factory. It was not long before he had a disease known as rum rash. One night he was not able to go to work. He told his wife to summon a doctor, but the landlady, a thrifty soul, persuaded Hattie to get a city doctor, and thereby save two dollars. Now the city doctors were for those who couldn't afford to pay, and, therefore, were sometimes of inferior grade. The one that answered Mrs. Parker's call was a young student from the City Hospital. After examining Jim, he mistook rum rash for a certain disease common to people of low moral fiber. Jim was insulted. He left his bed, and, forgetting he could not walk, rushed the young doctor out of the house, kicking him as he went. Jim's morals were high, and he would not have them called into question.

A further complication was the fact that Jim had ruptured himself from overwork. After finding out that only a city doctor had been summoned, Jim sent his wife over to the planing mill on Eustis Street and

had a pair of crutches made for him out of two boards. Jim then went to the Massachusetts General Hospital, where he had been operated on as a boy of twelve, and had himself examined. They found only rum rash and a rupture. They relieved the rupture as best they could with bandages and other devices, and advised Jim that the rash could only be cured by not drinking alcohol, particularly rum. Jim continued his work at the factory. One afternoon, when he was bringing home some wood in his arms, he met a big fat fellow at the door.

"Does James Parker live here?" inquired that person.

"Sure," said Jim. "Wait a minute until I put this wood down cellar. I'll see."

"Who are you?" inquired the two-hundred-and-fifty pounder.

"I'm Jim Parker," replied Jim, as he walked past the stranger, and put the wood down cellar. Then, when he came up again, he inquired curiously, "What can I do for you?"

"I'm the Board of Health doctor, and have come to examine you," said the large one, sternly.

Now Jim, to avoid trouble, should have let the doctor fulfil his office. But Jim was stubborn, and had had enough of the city officials.

"Get the h—— out of here, or I'll kick you out of here like I did the other one! The city of Boston has got some bum doctors if you two are representatives of them. I wouldn't take your word on a sick cat!"

The doctor grew red with anger. "You'll hear from me later!" he said, as he left.

That all happened on a Thursday afternoon in the fall of 1905. Jim worked that night and the next night. Saturday morning he came home with a can of beer. He had just seated himself to enjoy it when in walked two big officers, with gold braids on their sleeves. Jim looked up in astonishment.

"We've come to take you to Tewksbury because you are a menace to public health!" spoke one.

"Take me if you can!" answered Jim gruffly, as he took hold of the chair he was sitting in. Standing, he aimed a blow at the head of the officer, but it struck on his shoulder. Then the officers closed in on Jim, who fought fiercely for at least ten minutes. A crowd of about two hundred people gathered, and they soon saw Jim, handcuffed, put into the "black Maria." He was rushed to the Pemberton Square Court House, where he was held until afternoon. Then, escorted by two guards, Jim boarded the train for the State Farm and Hospital at Tewksbury.

Now it so happened that there were scores of applicants for the State Farm in the fall. Yet all could not go, because the applications far exceeded accommodations. Jim was one of the chosen ones — yet he by no means was feeling fine on that train ride to Tewksbury. The other four or five who were going to the farm did feel privileged, however. When they reached Tewksbury, Dr. Holmes greeted them; but seeing one man in handcuffs and with guards, exclaimed:

"What's the big idea? This isn't a prison!"

"Well," responded one of the guards, "he wouldn't come, so we had to commit him." He then told the doctor the disease for which Jim had been committed.

Then up spoke Jim.

"You take these handcuffs off of me and I'll show you whether I'm a diseased man or not!" Then he turned around to Dr. Holmes, and said, "Are you a doctor?"

"Yes, I'm the head physician here," replied the doctor in a kindly voice.

"You'd ought to know whether a man has a damnable disease or not. I want you to give me an examination."

Dr. Holmes saw that Jim had been ruptured, and Jim told him of his visit to the Massachusetts General Hospital.

"Look at all the trouble I've got into," said Jim in a melancholy tone, "trying to save two lousy dollars!"

"Well, we'll be going. You can handle him, can you?" said one of the guards, noticing that Dr. Holmes and Jim had reached an understanding.

"I guess you'd better go! As far as I can see this is an outrage!" replied the doctor.

The officers passed Dr. Holmes the committal papers. The doctor spoke:

"I guess he won't be hard to handle. Looks to me as though he got a raw deal. I'd kick over the traces if I had such a raw deal as this appears to be. But, at any rate, I'll take care of him. I'll examine him."

The officers then removed the handcuffs from Jim, and left. Jim was escorted into the doctor's private office and given an examination. He, too, told Jim that he only had rum rash.

Then came another blow to Jim. He learned that he couldn't be discharged from the State Hospital until the Board of Commissioners had come up — and that wouldn't be for ten days. Against his will, Dr. Holmes told Jim that he'd have to hold him until he was discharged by the commissioners.

In the meantime back in Boston on Harrison Avenue, Mrs. Parker had tried to make the best of things. The afternoon that Jim had arrived at Tewksbury, the Children's Society had arrived at Mrs. Parker's home to take the children into custody. But some kind neighbors came to the back door (just as representatives of the Children's Society came to the front door) and warned Mrs. Parker, who gathered up what money she could find, and with her two children left for Whitman, where the kind Mrs. Mann of the Salvation Army took them all in.

Jim, at the State Hospital, had finally resolved to get away. Now there were many tramps at this State institution — which was an insane asylum, hospital, and poor farm, combined — who usually stayed for the winter. They feigned sickness, or gave an alibi of incapacity that allowed them to live at ease in the fairy-land in Tewksbury. Some of those unfortunate men took care of the sick in the hospitals — others were used as guards at the various gates of the institution.

Jim saw one big bum at the gate where he planned to make his escape. Now the guards were given orders to let nobody by them without a permit, and to let no inmates approach them. But Jim, with his "line," figured that he would be able to "put one over" on the guard. Approaching the gate keeper, he hastily asked if he had any tobacco. No — the guard did not. Then, before any words could be made about the limits of the inmates, Jim had engaged him in conversation. Soon they both were laughing and joking in a most friendly manner. Jim told the guard what he thought of the institution — which wasn't much. All the time, Jim drew closer to the man, who was much taller and much heavier than he. Then, all of a sudden, crash! Jim struck his opponent a mighty blow on the jaw, which sent the guard reeling to the ground. Jim dashed through the gate, on both sides of which was a high brick wall.

It was about seven o'clock in the evening when Jim made his escape. At eight o'clock the inmates were put to bed. Jim had chosen the proper hour — and it was dark — so dark, that Jim did not see the little cemetery ahead of him, where the poor souls who had died in the institution were laid away to rest. Upon each grave was a little iron ring, with no name upon it, but a number instead. In the office, where the "Book of the Dead" was kept, the names of the former inmates were placed beside the numbers, so that if, in a future date, some wealthy relative should claim a body, the right one could be located. Jim's foot caught in

first one hook and then another. Many times he fell, and many hooks he dragged along with his foot. Naturally, the numbers were all mixed up, so that the number, say of John Brown, might have been placed, the next day, on the grave of Mary Smith. But Jim could not help that; and nobody on earth cared very much.

Finally, after many tosses, Jim won his way to a street. But, meanwhile, the guard had recovered, given the alarm, and searching parties had been sent out. Jim heard a one-horse buggy approaching at a rapid rate behind him. He knew it contained guards; but instead of sneaking off, Jim turned around and began walking toward the approaching vehicle. The buggy slowed down as it approached Jim, and the runaway saw two guards looking this way and that way from their buggy watch tower.

"Hey! young fellow!" shouted one. "Did you see anybody acting strange around here?"

Then, pointing to a nearby hill Jim exclaimed, "Sure. He was running to beat the band down over that hill. I thought at the time it was somebody getting away from the institution. If I had to stay in that dump, I'd want to get away myself!"

"Ay! You think you're smart!" replied the spokesman of the two guards. "They's worse places than that!" Whereupon he lashed the horse and went off toward the hill Jim had pointed out.

Jim got his bearings by a signboard, and started to hike toward Boston. Then along came another buggy

— this time it contained a good Samaritan rather than guards.

“Have you got your fare?” inquired an old farmer, for there were trolley car tracks in the road.

“If I can’t get a conductor to take me in,” replied Jim, “I’ll follow the car track.”

The farmer invited Jim to get in his buggy. They had not gone far when the farmer asked Jim if he had run away from the State Hospital. Everybody was on the look out for a runaway, and the farmer thought he would find out who was riding with him. Jim confessed that he had just escaped; and in a few minutes had told his whole story — of how he had been committed unfairly that very afternoon. The farmer, when Jim had finished, said he had never heard of such an outrage. When they arrived at the farmer’s home, Jim was given an excellent supper and lots of sympathy from the farmer and his wife. He was also given fifty cents, which paid his car fare part-way to Boston. Jim walked most of the distance, however, to save some of his money for breakfast. He reached his home in Roxbury about seven o’clock in the morning. His wife had returned from Whitman, and was exceedingly glad and surprised to see Jim. But realizing that his break for freedom might mean a jail term, she urged him to return again, stay the ten days in the hospital, and then get back at Dr. Shea — for that was the name of the fat public health official who had Jim committed.

And so, after Jim had collected and given to his wife

all the money that was due him at the Derby Desk Company, he returned to Tewksbury.

"Where've you been?" demanded Dr. Holmes in an angry tone.

"Where do you suppose?" said Jim. "I've been home."

"What for?" queried Dr. Holmes.

"To see my wife and children," snapped back Jim.

"Well, what did you come back for? Why didn't you stay away after you once got away?" asked Dr. Holmes sharply.

"My wife thought I better come back and stay the ten days and then get discharged. I feel that after I get a discharge, I'm going to get after Dr. Shea. I'll be clear, then."

This seemed to satisfy Dr. Holmes, so Jim was taken to his room, shown his duties, and given a chance to get acquainted. Jim had not been back a half hour before he met one of the two guards that he met right after his get-away the day before. Jim recognized the guard; the guard recognized Jim as the man who had run away, but did not at first notice that it was the very one who had given them directions.

"Where'd you come from?" angrily inquired the guard of Jim.

"Roxbury. Where do you suppose?" answered Jim just as angrily.

"What did you go there for?" came the next question.

"To see my wife and children. What do you suppose for?" came the answer.

Then the other guard spoke up. "What do you think this is, a summer resort — that you can come and go when you please?"

"I can!" replied Jim firmly.

Then the first guard approached closer, looked Jim over, and exclaimed, "Hey! This was the fellow that told us about the man going over the fields." And then, questioning Jim, "Aren't you? And he was the guy we was after? What do you know about that! What was you walking toward the hospital for? Why weren't you going the other way?"

"You'd be looking for a fellow to go the other way, but you wasn't looking for one to come up, were you? Why don't you use your nut? I do mine," answered Jim.

The guards and all laughed merrily. It was not long before Jim made friends with all of them, and he seemed to act like a privileged character around the institution, for the information soon leaked out that Jim had been forced there without cause. Jim's clothes were confiscated, and he had to wear the white hospital shirt, which had big letters on the front, "M. S. H.," standing for "Massachusetts State Hospital." He was given great clod-hopper shoes, which reminded him of gunboats, and which would retard his progress should he try to run away.

Jim's work was to wait on some of the poor old cripples who had been forsaken by friends and taken charge of by the State. He did about what he pleased — sometimes he would wait on the unfortunates —

bring them their meals or perhaps give them a word of cheer. Jim, of course, could not get alcoholics while he was in the hospital — and it was then that his sunshiny disposition made itself apparent. His heart went out to the unfortunates.

The old and feeble were fed butterine in place of real butter — but sometimes Jim would smuggle in real butter from the kitchen to them. One day he was making the bed in a large ward, when he noticed one bum, who had come to the institution for his winter's board and room, twisting the arm of a cripple, to make him hurry and eat his gruel. The cripple was about seventy years old, bedridden and paralyzed in the arms. He would have complained if he could have — but he was dumb. The moment Jim saw the vagabond wrench the man's arm, he stopped his bed-making and rushed toward the heartless brute. Under the blows which Jim showered upon him, the bum fell to the floor, and for about five minutes thereafter Jim's fists pummeled his body. Several doctors, hearing the commotion, rushed upon the scene and separated the two. Jim told his story. Others in the room who could speak verified it, and even told of other cruelties. The hobo was sent to the prison at Bridge-water to serve for nine months.

One of Jim's best friends was another Jack O'Brien, who had been committed for disease many months before, but had supposedly been cured. He, too, was waiting papers of acquittal from the Commissioner. Finally, after ten days, word came to Jim and Jack

that the Commissioner was sick, and wouldn't be able to come to the hospital for another ten days. That, indeed, made Jim angry — and Jack, too, who said to Jim:

"I'm going to beat it!"

"So would I," replied Jim, "if I had a pair of shoes and a shirt."

Now Jack had charge of the receiving department, and when Jim spoke of shoes and a shirt Jack said:

"That's easy. When a couple of stiffs of our size come in, I'll get an outfit for both of us." Now a "stiff" is a dead person. Jack intended to steal clothes from the dead, which he did the very next day. He hid them outdoors where they could easily be reached.

The guard which Jim had deceived in his previous flight had been sent away in disgrace; and a paid officer had taken his place. About 7:30 P. M., near the closing time, Jack O'Brien approached the guard and commenced to talk with him. Their conversation centered about the affairs of the institution. Jim crouched up behind the guard, and, when Jack hit the officer in the face, the force of the blow sent him bowling over Jim and onto the ground. The two then snatched up their bundles of shoes and shirts, and ran down the road. Jack had a little money — tips that he had received from officials of the institution and visitors — and with it, they both took an early morning trolley to Boston. After indulging in a few drinks, Jack O'Brien left for Somerville, while Jim went to South Boston and stayed at a friend's house.

He wrote his wife Hattie a letter, addressing it to Whitman, and telling her to come home. He then hastened to the Emergency Hospital, where the doctors gave him a thorough examination. Upon paying \$2 for a card, he received a clean bill of health. Jim's next move was to go over to the Derby Desk Company and make arrangements to go to work the night of the following day.

By eight o'clock in the morning of the next day, Jim had arrived at the home of the health official who had committed him to the State Hospital. The maid came to the door.

"Is Dr. Shea in?" inquired Jim politely.

"No, he's in bed," replied the servant. "You can't get him up until later."

"Get him up!" bellowed Jim. "Tell him if he doesn't see me immediately, I'm going down to see the mayor! Tell him I'm Jim Parker, the man he sent away to Tewksbury without an examination! I'll see why it was he sent me away, a well man, and then 'sicked' the Children's Society on my wife to take my children away!"

Without delay the maid hastened upstairs. Not taking time to dress, Dr. Shea put on his bath robe and slippers and hastened to greet his guest.

"Look at that!" exclaimed Jim as he showed the doctor his clean bill of health. "I've got services with doctors paid for one year. I'm not a pauper now!"

"Well, now," calmly replied Dr. Shea, "let's reason this thing out. Don't get hot-headed."

"You'd get hot-headed if you got taken away from your wife — and then had the Children's Society 'sicked' on you to take away your children and break up your home!" Jim bellowed.

"Why didn't you let me examine you?" further reasoned the doctor. And why hadn't Jim let Dr. Shea examine him? Because Jim Parker was stubborn and hot-headed. That's why. But would Jim admit such faults? No!

"Oh, I've had one experience with city doctors and I've found out that they don't know anything," growled Jim. "And you've proved it by what you did!" he added in a triumphant tone.

"If you had let me examine you," added Dr. Shea, "then it wouldn't have happened, because I would have found out that you didn't have the malady."

"Well, you sent two big cops to overpower me. Why didn't you examine me then?" came back Jim.

The doctor said nothing. He could say nothing, for Jim occupied the rest of the interview by giving his opponent the worst tongue lashing he could. He left the house still angry. He then hastened to the office of the mayor of Boston and told his story. The affair ended when Dr. Shea made an apology to Jim Parker in the presence of the City Board of Health and the mayor.

Soon after his wife and children had returned from Whitman, Jim moved to Gold Street, in Roxbury. He continued his drinking. He worked as boss at the

Derby Desk Company nights, and during the day, after drinking alcohol, he slept. At one time one of Jim's aunts came to visit him. It was during the day, when Jim was lying down on the couch sleeping — recuperating from the effects of a night's work and an early morning's drinks. His wife told the aunt not to wake him up — because he had come home drunk. But the fun-loving relative thought she knew what was what — so she tickled Jim's nose, as he lay sleeping on his couch, with a feather. Jim got up raging, and for spite he kicked his foot through every window in the room. The landlord, hearing the loud crashing of glass, summoned the policeman and had Jim arrested. The next morning, after an evening in prison, Jim was dismissed by the probation officer at about seven o'clock. When he got home, he found that his landlord had gone down to court to appear against him. Now Jim was an honest man, and would pay honest debts. When he had heard of the results of his rage the day before, he planned to have the window panes replaced. But when he heard of the landlord's actions, he became so angry that he vowed he not only wouldn't pay for the glass — but would move instead. He had plenty of money on hand at the time. Jim planned to make an immediate departure. In a few minutes he hired a house on Desmond Street, near the Fellows Street Playground.

Jim knew some rowdies who usually hung out at the nearby corners. They were known as "The Forty Thieves," for they ordinarily subsisted on stolen

goods: snatched pocketbooks, milk from the large cans, grocery parcels, and anything else that pleased them. Jim, well acquainted with the crowd, asked them how much they would charge for moving his goods to a nearby house. They said \$2. All of the thieves then filed into Jim's house, and, each taking some piece of furniture, went to the new home of their friend on Desmond Street. During the procedure the disappointed landlord returned from court, angry because Jim had not been there. But when he saw "Forty Thieves" on his premises, he immediately ordered them out. The thieves, however, contended that they had a lawful right to be in the house, since they had been hired to move Jim's furniture. When the angry landlord tried to force the movers out, they told him to beat it, or they would beat him. The landlord left. After which, the last article (the kitchen stove) was taken by four "Thieves" to Desmond Street, and set up in Jim's new kitchen. Jim paid them the \$2, with which they purchased eight quarts of beer — filling one of their stolen eight-quart milk cans. They then had a party on the Fellows Street Playground.

CHAPTER VII

MORE TROUBLES OF A DRUNKARD

Jim loved his two children. Carleton, the older, with his blue eyes, was more dreamy and quiet than Alfred. Both boys liked to play with matches, as all boys did. Both liked their father to toss them into the air and to give them "pig-backs" around the house. Jim loved to play with his children.

Jim used to take the Sunday papers. He delighted to read and explain the big colored sheets from the Boston Sunday *Globe*. They particularly liked "Little Nemo" and "The Little Mechanical Man," of whom it was said, "Brains he has — nix."

It was Monday morning, February 12, in the year 1906, about two weeks after "The Forty Thieves" had moved Jim's goods to Desmond Street. Jim left the house with a friend at about 1:40 P. M., to get a drink. He planned to show his friend where he could sell his overcoat for a drink or so. Later they were passing Jim's house, when Jim discovered that the fire department had surrounded his house. That was about twenty minutes after two. Jim rushed up stairs, and found little Carleton crying hard. A neighbor, who was trying to console him told Jim what had happened.

Carleton had been playing with matches. Evi-

dently he dropped a lighted one on the Sunday paper; for it soon caught fire. That had delighted little Alfred, who pulled the fire closer to him in order to feel its warmth and watch it blaze at close range. But his clothes caught fire. No one was at home but the two children. Jim, himself, was in a barroom drinking alcoholics. Mrs. Parker had gone out to buy a bundle of firewood. The baby screamed. Carleton took hold of his hand and led him toward the front door, crying all the way. The clothing on the baby had nearly burned, when a man passing by saw him, and taking off his own coat, smothered the flames. Mrs. Parker arrived just in time to see her son ablaze. Frantic, she wrapped him up and ran with him in her arms to the City Hospital. It took her about ten minutes, and all the way the baby screamed. In the meantime the mantelpiece caught fire, but kind neighbors had summoned the fire department, which put out the blaze. They were trying to quiet Carleton when Jim came home.

Jim hastened to the hospital. During those moments he thought of the many times he had told the boys not to play with matches — and how many times he had caught them disobeying him.

“You’ll get burnt, Ally, you’ll get burnt,” Jim used to tell his son.

But the boys had persisted — and Alfred had even knocked the isinglass out of the stove in order to get nearer fire. When he reached the hospital he asked in the office where his boy had been put. He was told

"Ward D." He took the elevator, got out, and asked a nurse where a little boy that had just been burned had been placed. The nurse did not have to answer Jim, for away off a little boy recognized his father's voice and sobbed:

"I'm here, papa, I'm here!"

Jim rushed to his side. Doctors and nurses were rubbing him with oil to ease his pain. Jim looked at his boy — his face was burnt to a grizzle — the outline of his little ribs could be seen on his chest.

"I done it, papa, I done it!" cried Alfred in dismay.

"Yes," cried Jim, "God help you, you've done it!"

The fearful sight was too much for Jim.

"I'm going," he told a doctor, "I can't stand this any longer. Do what you can for him."

So, leaving his wife and baby, Jim hurried to the barroom across the street and vainly tried to drown his sorrow with first a half a glass of whiskey, and then some beer as a chaser. Shortly he had consumed a pint of whiskey and a larger quantity of beer. That was not enough, so he purchased another pint of whiskey, and went home. There he drank the whole bottle and then went to sleep.

Mrs. Parker came home in the evening. She would have hastened right back to the hospital, were she not afraid that her husband, in a drunken rage, would kill the boy Carleton and then himself. Midnight passed; a sorrowing mother wept. A lonesome baby boy cried for his mother. It was quarter of two that morning when the little fellow died, with none of his kin to kiss

him farewell — with neither father nor mother nor brother to say “good-bye” — all because of booze!

Mrs. Parker received a telegram of her son’s death, but fearing she would lose her second child if she left him, she dared not go away from the house. The next day, still in the state of intoxication, Jim made arrangements for the funeral. On Wednesday, February 14, at 10 A. M., Alfred was buried at the Knolwood Cemetery for Babies at Sharon, Massachusetts. Jim went to the funeral — riding behind the hearse in a hack — but so intoxicated that he remembered nothing of what took place. Carleton was there, with his mother. There were only two others present — Mrs. McMannus, and Rosie — neighbors of the Parkers.

The death of little Alfred, instead of bringing Jim closer to God, took him farther and farther away from Him. Jim cursed and defied his Maker, whom he blamed for his misfortunes. Jim Parker had brought on his own troubles; Jim Parker served the Devil rather than the Creator. Jim Parker became a worse slave to booze and Satan than he had ever been before. To drown the memories of the dear one he had held in his arms, he went on a mad drunk — worse than any before — a drunk that would easily have killed an ordinary man — but not Jim Parker.

Again he sold his furniture — to buy booze. Through drink he lost his job at the Derby Desk Company, where for two years he had earned fine wages. He and his family went to live with an aunt — Mrs. McNeil — who out of sympathy for their recent catas-

trophe, willingly took the Parkers in. Jim went to work as a cabinet-maker — but soon, irritating the boss, he got fired. He drifted about here and there — at one factory he slapped his superior's face — at another he struck his overseer on the jaw. During the six months that followed his son's death, he was arrested in one city seven times for drunkenness. Finally, before the judge, he was sentenced to from six to nine months at Bridgewater. But his wife pleaded with the judge — told him of their misfortunes, cried for mercy — and finally was told that if she would take care of him, he could go free. But she must take him out of town.

With the money that was taken in from another furniture sale, Mrs. Parker paid the debts she could. They moved to Mansfield, Massachusetts, where Jim easily got work in the Cap and Dye Works. But Carleton grew ill, and many doctors were called in to help the boy. Soon after, Jim was fired again for drinking.

Then at Brockton, where the Parkers went to live with Jim's parents, Jim accepted work at B. S. Atwood's Factory, where he made boxes and did general woodworking. But before two or three weeks had elapsed, he was fired because of his drinking. He went from job to job, managing to save enough money to buy furniture for a home, where he went to house-keeping.

Now Jim's brothers — Bill and Hallet — had learned the steeple jack trade. And it was not long before they asked Jim to help them. This Jim did readily. He soon learned the trade, and could work as well as they. But strong drink made Jim quarrelsome, and it was not long before he fought with his brothers, left them, and then went to steeple jacking on his own hook.

He moved with his family to Boston, where he went about looking for flag poles to paint. He found all the work he wanted, and even when drunk did the work well. His early experiences on board ship were his training, for he could climb a flag pole as fast as he could climb a mast. It took him but fifteen or twenty minutes to paint an ordinary pole, for which he received from \$5 to \$10.

For about a year Jim worked on small jobs until he landed his first big job in Everett, Massachusetts, where he was given the contract to take down the spire on the First Presbyterian Church. During the time he worked on that job the Parkers lived in a house on Main Street, on Thompson's Square, Charlestown. One day Jim was knocked out and robbed by a red-headed man. In a drunken stupor, Jim saw a policeman with red hair, and, thinking that he had been the robber, Jim cursed. Jim was given a good chance to sober up in the lock up.

Then, another day, after Jim had made a disturbance in the attic rooms of his home, and called the landlord names in a loud voice, the owner, Mr. McEllen,

appeared on the scene. Jim had previously given him a trouncing and said:

"Beat it or I'll beat you up again!" Mr. McEllen did beat it — and came back with officers. Jim raged as they came up the stairs. But when they came near him he bowled one of them over again with a blow on the jaw. But both finally got hold of Jim and tried to pull him down stairs. Then Jim broke out twenty-seven banisters in his struggles, and tried to fight off the cops with them. Finally, the officers beat Jim into unconsciousness, got him into a patrol wagon, and took him off to the station.

Previously, Jim's brother Bill had given up steeple jacking and had returned to fishing. Jim's father had come to Charlestown to help Jim on his first big job, but three days before Jim's arrest he had gone down to "T" wharf where his son's boat was waiting, to see Bill before he left. But the father had not returned, and Jim did not know where he had gone.

The morning following his arrest, after a night in the gaol, the probation officer came down to see Jim. He told him that the Parkers were coming down pretty often.

"You were here less than two weeks ago yourself, and I had to send your father away two days ago for thirty days on the Island. It's too bad, because he's a nice old man. But he had done time in Bridgewater, and he had a parole in his pocket. So we got in touch with the Brockton authorities and they asked us to have him sentenced here. And now I suppose you'll go down and keep him company."

Yes, Jim's father, borne down by many troubles, had tried to find solace in the bottle. Jim had been his worst tormentor — his worst trouble, and had been mostly responsible for the elder Parker's return to the booze trail.

"If I do," said Jim, replying to the probation officer, "you people will have to pay for quite a number of funeral expenses and considerable damage. For I've got the top of that church spire sawed off and hanging in the air at Everett, and I don't know whether it's safe enough because I was drunk the last time I was up there."

Jim always had a good excuse to keep him out of jail. Then up spoke the probation officer again.

"Well, we don't want that, so I'll talk it over with the judge, and we'll see what we can do for you."

The judge, after hearing the story, fined Jim \$5 and required that he be held until the fine was paid. Again Jim's staunch wife came to his rescue. She went over to the house of a deacon of the Presbyterian Church, and asked for money so that Jim could finish the job. He gave her the \$5; Jim was released and soon finished the work.

Jim also painted smokestacks and water towers. For the United States government he put up the iron work on the Weather Bureau of the Post Office at the corner of Milk and Water Streets in Boston. From factory to factory he went, making big money, but always squandering it on booze. He and his family moved again and again, rarely staying in furnished

rooms more than a week. Jim was arrested three or four times a month on an average.

From Boston they moved to Lowell, where he painted the flag pole on the County Jail and also two poles on Hood's Sarsaparilla Laboratories. He worked on many smokestacks there. From Lowell he went to Lawrence, where he was awarded the contract of painting all the flag poles on the public schools and fire stations. Patrick Hennessy, Superintendent of Public Buildings, gave him the work. Before he left town he had painted every flag pole he had asked to paint.

The Parkers then moved to Providence, where Jim took down the tower of the Fletcher Mills on Charles Street. He painted the Massey Wireless on top of the Narragansett Hotel, which was 100 feet high. But the pole was 212 feet, which made a total height of 312 feet from the ground.

At New York City, where Jim went from Providence, he painted the flag poles on the Knickerbocker Hotel, the Old Normandy Hotel, Saks and Company, Signal Cooking Building, Fourteenth Street Store, Greenwich Bank, Hotel Breslin, Liberty Woman and Liberty Storage Company, and those on other buildings.

How Mrs. Parker lived through the life she did is a mystery. When she met and married Jim she thought she was winning a real hero. He had acted comparatively well until the baby was burned to death. But after that it had been one hectic experience after an-

other. Many times she took him food while he was in jail. Many times she pleaded before a judge. Many times she laid awake nights listening to him sing, holler, or talk in his *deliriums*. From cheap lodging house to cheap lodging house she followed him. If she ever locked him out, he would kick in the door. If she tried to reason with him, he would not listen. One good thing — he never, even in a drunk, had been brute enough to hit her or harm her.

When penniless, he pawned the furniture and clothing for booze. He would come home at two in the morning, go to bed, see devils, hobgoblins, and elephants after him. By his shouting he would wake up his frail son, Carleton. Sometimes the small boy would crawl in bed with him to keep him quiet. He would bring out a story book and read it to his drunken father. Perhaps he would fetch a pipe and make Jim smoke it, blow rings, and finally see him fall off to sleep.

The Parkers did not stay long in New York City, but returned to Providence, where Jim and his wife had a quarrel. Jim put Carleton in the St. Vincent de Paul Home in Providence. But after about two weeks Jim and his wife made up again, and the boy came back to the family.

Then they went to live with Jim's father and mother, who had moved to West Mansfield, Massachusetts. One night Jim fought with his father, who finally tied his son securely to a bed. He went into

the next room to tell the other members of the family that the drunkard had been subdued, and that the house would be secure for the night, when in stepped Jim, who had untied the knots. His father was a puzzled man.

His family could not endure Jim long, and Jim, with wife and boy, again moved to New York City. Soon after arriving there, Mrs. Parker became sick and was removed to the Bellevue Hospital, where she stayed for some time. Jim worked here and there.

One afternoon in September, 1908, Jim was walking along West Street near the water front, feeling miserable and hard up for a drink. He happened to look across the river, where there loomed up in a row three mighty flag poles. He hastened to the ferry, and told the man who ran it that he lived across in Jersey, and asked him if he'd let him pass over.

"All right; go ahead," replied the man.

When Jim reached the other side he found out that the poles belonged to Colgate's Soap and Perfume Factory. Jim went in to see the master mechanic, Mr. Davy, and asked him for the job of painting the pole. When Mr. Davy inquired how much the cost would be, Jim said \$5 apiece. Jim went up on the roof of the building, climbed up the back of an immense sign, and with the paint Mr. Davy had furnished him, painted the three poles in about two and three quarters hours. All that time he was getting drier and drier — now and then eyeing Tom O'Brien's barroom across

the street, and hurrying to get the job done so that he could get the money with which to buy drink. He finished, quickly collected his pay from Mr. Davy, and was about to hasten to Tom O'Brien's, when up stepped a neat appearing office boy, and told him that Mr. Colgate would like to see him.

"Tell him," said Jim, "to wait a while, and I'll be back."

"But," returned the office boy, "Mr. Colgate wants to see you right away."

In an angry mood, Jim stepped into the office of Austin Colgate, son of the famous Samuel Colgate, who had come to the city a poor boy, and had risen to the millionaire philanthropist class.

"Well, do you think you could paint our clock?" inquired Mr. Colgate.

"Sure," replied Jim eagerly. "I can paint anything. Where is it?"

"Where is it?" replied the astonished Mr. Colgate. "Why man, you've been working above the largest clock in the world. Didn't you know it?"

"No. Where is it, on that sign?" further inquired Jim, pointing to the clock, above which he had been working. "I knew there was some kind of a sign under me, but I didn't know it was a clock. I had my mind on my poles." This was a lie on Jim's part, for both his mind and eyes had been on Tom O'Brien's barroom across the way.

Mr. Colgate stood up from his desk chair and said:

"We'll go up and look at it. I guess you'd better see it before you say you can paint it."

So they both went out to view the clock, which had a diameter of thirty-eight feet, with hands weighing almost two tons. That clock was not only the largest in the world at the time, but also in all history, except for the ancient timepiece of Mechlin, Belgium, which was built by the monks in the Middle Ages. It had a diameter of forty feet. However, that clock had but one hand, while the Colgate timepiece had two.

There were others in the party with Mr. Colgate and Jim. They laughed heartily when told that Jim had been working above it all day, but had not realised that fact until Mr. Colgate had called his attention to it. He inquired of Jim:

“How would you go about setting up the rigging to paint it? The clock has got to be kept going all the time, because we do not want to stop it.”

Jim, with the master mind, solved the problem, and told Mr. Colgate how he would do the job. He would arrange it so that from a figure “L” hook he could be swung out two feet and a half from the face of the clock. This hook would have a link on one end, so that Jim could put his block and falls in place. Mr. Colgate gave Jim the job, telling him to come over the next day and he would have the blacksmith make him the proper hook.

The next day Jim started on the job. At the time he was living on the East Side, and did not know very much about the West Side. He got off the ferry boat at Desbrosses Street, and stepping up to a policeman, asked him how he could get over to his home on

Avenue B. But instead of answering Jim's question, the policeman arrested him for being drunk. Jim was brought up before the judge — a man to whom Jim had been introduced that very day, by Mr. Davy. He looked down from his bench, recognized Jim, and asked him how he happened to be arrested. Jim told his story. Then the judge asked the policeman why he arrested Jim. Finally the officer was rebuked for arresting a sober man, for, according to the judge, the accused could not have had time to clean up and get to drinking since the time when he, the judge, had seen the defendant sober. The case was dismissed, and Jim went home with congratulations from the judge.

It took two and a half days for Jim to finish painting the clock, for which Mr. Davy gave him \$50. Mr. Davy also inquired of Jim what he planned to do next. Jim said he had nothing in particular to do. Then Mr. Davy told him that his brother-in-law owned an estate out in Larchmont Manor, where there was a flag pole which needed painting. Mr. Davy couldn't remember the size, but said that whatever the price was for the job, his brother-in-law would pay. Jim promised he would go out the very next day.

That night Jim visited the various saloons on the Bowery. At three o'clock the next morning he staggered home. About six o'clock the next morning he got up in a dazed condition and happened to remember that he had a job to do that day. He took his ordinary "slips" — the ones he painted common

poles with, and started for Larchmont Manor. At the Grand Central Station he had to wait about an hour for the train. He spent the time in a barroom. When he took the train, he was drunk. At Larchmont Manor Jim found out that the pole at the estate of Mr. Davy's brother-in-law — Mr. Fred Olive — was a hundred-foot double one, and as big around at the base as a barrel. The apparatus that Jim had brought would hardly do for such a job. There was a rope on the pole, with which they used to lower the top mast in the winter. Jim asked the man who tended the garage and stable nearby to help him. Jim then made a bo's'n chair, and hitched his can of paint and slips on that, until he could ride high enough to use his slips. He then had his friend pull him up. But the rope was old and rotten. Jim, in his drunken condition, had overlooked that fact. When he was up about seventy feet — to the cross trees, he pushed himself out from the pole with his foot, intending to reach the cross trees and pull himself up. But the rope broke, and Jim travelled faster than he ever had before. There was about four feet of concrete around the base of the pole, and if the rope had broken before Jim got to the cross piece, he would have surely fallen on the concrete, and would have been killed outright. As it was, he reached the outside of the concrete circle, his left foot sunk into the loam nearly up to his knee cap. His bo's'n chair struck both elbows and buckled up against his back.

Mrs. Fred Olive, who had been standing in the

window, watching Jim go up, screamed and fainted. When Jim fell, the paint can hit the cement and in a shower bath covered Jim with white paint. He looked like a ghost. The man who had pulled the rope to hoist Jim up, fell when the rope broke, but quickly arose, took one look at Jim and ran away just as fast as he could, and never returned for his clothes or the pay due him. Somebody near the scene shouted, "Bring some water!" The house cook, who at the time of the fall happened to be going out doors with a pan full of dish water to put on the flower bed, in her excitement ran over and threw it all over Jim. Jim was conscious all the time, but instead of thanking the well-meaning cook, swore at her with all his strength. Finally, some level-headed person telephoned for a doctor, who appeared on the scene in about ten minutes. The doctor found Jim still conscious, and sputtering oaths like a baboon. He lifted him up from the bo's'n chair and then laid him back on the ground. Jim was the first to speak.

"All right to get up now, doctor?"

"Yes," said he, "if you can."

Jim made an effort to get up, but found he couldn't, for his legs and arms were completely paralyzed. Jim looked up at the doctor and said in a plaintive way:

"What the d——l is the matter? What's holding me down?"

"I think you've got a broken back," replied the doctor. Jim didn't swear any more; he did some heavy thinking. An ambulance soon appeared on the scene,

and he was rushed to a nearby hospital. He was put upon the operating table where the doctors found many things the matter with Jim: a double rupture, a sprained ankle, three arteries in the right leg broken, a gash in his head which would take nine stitches to mend, both elbows broken, and a broken back in the bargain. His worst injury, of course, was the last mentioned. However, the spinal cord itself had not been broken; if it had been, Jim would have been dead by the time he reached the hospital.

Up spoke a doctor. "Are you married?"

"Sure," answered Jim. "Got a wife and boy."

"Where do you live?" came another question.

"New York City!" replied Jim.

"New York City is a big place," asserted the same physician. "What street and number?"

"I ain't goin' to tell you," replied Jim.

"Why not?" hastily asked the doctor.

"My wife ain't expectin' me home for a week. Why should I make her worry?" Jim replied thoughtfully.

"Do you realize, young man," said the doctor seriously, "that you've only got about one hour to live?"

"What's going to kill me?" chirped up Jim.

"Why, your broken back, if nothing else," replied the doctor.

"If that's all, doctor," gaily replied Jim, "I'll live to put flowers on your grave!"

The doctors stepped back astonished. Such nerve they had never seen before. There was a whispered consultation. Then they stepped forward. The former spokesman again took the floor.

"I have often thought that where the spinal cord was not broken, if the vertebrae could be brought together and held to relieve the strain on the spinal cord, a person might live. This has never been tried here — but I am willing to give you a chance if you say so. Remember, it's going to hurt like h——, because we'll have to drill the bone, and you are in no condition to take anaesthetic. What do you say? Are you game?"

"Surest thing you know. Go to it," commanded Jim. "You're the doctor."

They went to it. It did hurt as frightfully as Jim thought h—— might hurt. They seemed to hit the nerves, and Jim was in torments. The flesh around the vertebrae, of course, had to be opened. A silver hinge was inserted, and fixed so as to hold the vertebrae together. The skin was then sewn up, and Jim was put in a plaster cast. His head was then sewed up, his ankle and elbows put in splints, and all else done that was possible. A pretty nurse spent a long time getting the paint off of Jim's face and the smokestack black from his legs.

A day or so later, when the doctors knew Jim would have a chance to live, Mr. Olive went to New York City in his limousine and brought out Mrs. Parker and Carleton. He then hired a furnished apartment on Grand Street, New Rochelle, and gave Mrs. Parker the use of it. She was a regular visitor at the hospital, until he was sent home on October 5, 1908. The hospital authorities and Mr. Fred Olive deemed it wise

to record but a sprain of the foot and ankle for Jim Parker. That might save trouble later on, they thought.

Mr. Fred Olive paid all expenses for the Parker family.

When Jim was discharged they moved to their former home in New York City. Now Jim had been told that the rope on the flag pole was a new one. But the fact was that a new one had been purchased but had lain in the garage, where the hired man had neglected to put it up in place of the old one. That was why the hired man had run away after Jim's fall, and hadn't returned for his clothes or pay. And that was why Mr. Olive, who perhaps feared a lawsuit, had willingly paid the hospital bills and the expenses of the Parker family for about thirteen months. But if Jim had not been a drunkard, he never would have had such a fall.

One day little Carleton was tantalizing his father by shaking a piece of burning paper in front of him — by way of fun. Jim ordered his son to stop, to which Carleton replied:

"But dad, you can't stop me."

This angered the father, who, forgetting that he had been paralyzed, made a jump for the boy. He did not succeed in his attempt, but went tumbling to the floor. Through this experience, though, Jim found he could use his limbs again; and then, in less than a month's time, he was able to get about the house on

crutches. Three more months found Jim back working again. He had been laid up for a year and a month.

Soon Jim moved to uptown New York. From there they went to Newark, New Jersey; and from Newark to Bridgeport, Connecticut. At Bridgeport the Parkers lived on Housatonic Avenue; and their house was directly across the street from a beer brewery. Jim got the job of painting the smokestack on the brewery. He was to receive no money for the job, but made a contract with the head man that he could get all the beer he wanted all winter. The painting took Jim about two hours. As the days went on, and Jim worked elsewhere, he began taking advantage of his agreement. Freight trains, running for the brewery, used to come up the street on which Jim lived — in front of the brewery. But he, intoxicated, used to crawl under the cars in order to get his can of beer. The brakeman got so nervous that he used to look under all the cars to see if Jim was underneath, before they started the engine.

The neighbors heard of Jim's arrangement, and knowing he was good hearted, got him to get their supply of drinks, too. Sometimes Jim would make twenty trips to the brewery for beer in a day. At last the owner found out that his smokestack was costing him a small fortune in beer, to say nothing of how Jim had bothered his help. If the affair went on, Jim would soon be supplying the whole city, and there would have to be a man at the draw pipe all the time

to wait on Jim. So one day, when he saw Jim going with his can for a supply, he called him into the main office and asked:

"How much money would it have cost me to get that stack painted?"

"Fifteen dollars," replied Jim.

The manager swore.

"It cost me more than that already with the trouble you've caused us. Give me that slip and I'll give you fifteen dollars!"

Jim gave the big Irishman the slip, who then commanded:

"Get out of here and keep out of here!"

Jim did get out, and the neighborhood, losing its supply, had to go back to the corner saloon to get beer.

Jim was arrested many times in Bridgeport. He was working on a chimney for the city, when, one night as he was coming home drunk, he vexed some of the policemen. But Jim got away. Two officers followed him to his home, and waited under his door step until he should come out again. The corner saloon closed at 11 P. M. Mrs. Parker had seen the officers follow Jim, and knew they would be near to arrest him should he make an appearance. When five minutes of eleven came, and Jim decided to go out for his evening beer, Mrs. Parker, who had her hair down and was ready to go to bed, refused to give Jim the beer can. Instead, she took the container and started to rush out of the home to a neighbor, where she planned to wait until the bar closed. Jim, when he reached

the outside door, lunged at her, and, without meaning harm, caught her by the hair to pull her back into the house.

Like jacks-in-the-box the two policemen jumped out of their seclusion under the outside steps. They seized Jim.

"We've got you now! Don't you know you shouldn't grab your wife by the hair?" one shouted.

Jim fought, according to his custom. They rolled all over the street. Finally they fastened the handcuffs on him and took him to jail. The next day, Sunday, Jim sobered up. On Monday he was brought up before the judge and charged with:

1. Assault on wife;
2. Assault on officers;
3. Disturbing the peace and disorderly conduct;
4. Drunkenness.

After the judge read off those charges, Jim interrupted.

"Wait a minute," said the nervy Downeaster. "Ain't you forgot something?"

"What?" inquired the judge curiously.

"You ain't got murder there," said Jim. "You ought to have that. You could put it over, for I was drunk anyway, and I don't know what I done."

The judge faintly smiled and said:

"You won't get drunk again for a year, anyway." Then he read off the sentence: four months for assault on wife; three months for assault on officers; \$25 and costs for disturbing the peace and disorderly conduct;

\$5 and costs for drunkenness. Then the probation officer came down stairs and informed the court that Jim, at the time, was working on a chimney for the city, and, of course, could not finish the work if sent to jail.

"Do you promise not to drink for a year?" the judge asked Jim.

"No," replied Jim. "I won't promise any such thing. If I didn't drink water or anything for a year, I'd be dead. I might as well go to jail as do that."

"I mean intoxicating liquor!" thundered the judge.

"I'll try," replied Jim, feigning to be meek. "I never have tried for years, but I'll try."

So the judge put Jim on probation, and let him go.

Jim finished working for the city. His next job was to paint the inside of the Bridgeport Boys' Club. Then, knowing that if he were arrested again he would be put in jail for a year, Jim gave away all his furnishings except his kitchen stove, which he sold to his friend, the brakeman, who had looked for him under the freight cars. The brakeman purchased the stove for his caboose, and paid fifteen cents for the heater. Jim bought beer with his fifteen cents.

Jim nearly always had a large roll of money on hand, but never was thrifty enough to put it in the bank. He allowed his wife and child very little money to live on. But when it came to moving, Jim always had enough for train fares. So the Parkers went from Bridgeport back to New York City. Of course, the boy Carleton, who was going to school at the time,

had to transfer — which meant much more work for him.

In Jersey City Jim obtained work painting an old ship mast that had been set up as a flag pole. This was owned by a certain Mr. Swanson, who ran a dry dock. Drunk, as usual, Jim started to do the job from the top down. Around the base of the pole Mrs. Swanson had nourished and carefully cared for a flower bed, which she was looking at when Jim started to paint the pole. Carelessly, Jim kept dripping paint from his brush. It covered the flowers and leaves with white drops. Mrs. Swanson grew angry, and told Jim to come down. But no coaxing on Mrs. Swanson's part could induce stubborn Jim to come down before he finished his work. Perhaps he talked to the lady in a discourteous manner, for she finally telephoned for a policeman. When one appeared on the scene he called in an authoritative Irish voice:

"Come down here 'til I arrest ya!"

"If you want to arrest me," shouted Jim, sixty feet in the air, "you come up here after me. But look out for the paint when you're coming up, or you'll get plastered with it!"

Jim sat back in his bo's'n chair to await developments. A crowd soon gathered, laughing at a policeman trying to arrest a drunken man perched sixty feet from the ground. Mrs. Swanson, seeing the multitude, got quite excited, and telephoned to her husband at the shipyard, asking him to come home. He soon appeared on the scene, and shouted to Jim:

"What's the matter? Why don't you come down?"

"What do I want to come down and get arrested for?" demanded Jim. "I'm sitting comfortable up here."

"Will you come down if I get the policeman out of here?" inquired the bewildered man.

"Yes," replied Jim, "If you'll promise he'll not arrest me, or bail me out if he does. I'm not going to lay in jail."

"All right," came the answer. "You come down and he won't arrest you."

But Jim still stayed on his perch above.

"Now listen," he reasoned, "I want to finish this job. I need the money. But if you want me to come down and you'll give me five dollars, I'll finish it in the morning."

The throng around the flag pole found great amusement in Jim's words. They all laughed heartily.

"Come on down!" shouted Mr. Swanson, somewhat exasperated. "I'll give you the money!"

Jim came down, got the five dollars, and went off to spend it for booze. The crowd dispersed. The next day he "made up" with Mrs. Swanson, finished painting the pole, and ended that episode.

The Parkers moved from New York City to Lawrence, Massachusetts, and again set up housekeeping. Jim commenced drinking — it seemed as though that old craving, in spite of his thirteen months as a cripple, could not be conquered by will power or time. He

had not been in Lawrence a month, when his father came on for a visit. Together they worked on a smoke-stack for a beer brewery, and together they got their fill of beer. At home one day Jim thought he would go out for more, but his father tried to prevent him by putting a chair against Jim's door, and sitting in it. But Jim, although they lived one flight up stairs, jumped out of an open window. Then he found he could not rise, and had to be carried into his home. For a week he put liniment on a swollen leg, but the swelling kept increasing — until Jim grew anxious and called a doctor. The physician told him that his leg had been broken, so he went to a hospital and had it set and put in a plaster cast. For another week Jim hobbled around on crutches. Then his father got a job painting a smoke stack, and asked Jim if he would like to help. Jim agreed, and the next day he went to the hospital and told the doctors to take off the cast. They refused, on the grounds that a cast should remain on for at least two weeks. When Jim saw that arguing was of no avail, he left, saying he would take it off himself. So he went to a cooper's shop, took a chisel and hammer, and split it in two pieces. He then drank more liquor, hastened to the stack where his father was working, and, half drunk, got part-way up the stack. The owner, however, saw Jim's crutches, came out, and told him to come down. He wouldn't have any cripples working for him. He warned Jim that he would fall and get killed; but Jim stayed up there and did not come down until the job was finished.

Soon after, Jim's father left for Lowell, Massachusetts, and a week later, Jim broke up his home in Lawrence and went to Lowell also. Jim agreed to take down a tall chimney for the Hamilton Mills, which he completed in about three weeks. During that time, however, the elder Parker left Lowell — and that was the last time Jim ever saw his father.

In Lawrence Jim got the job of taking down the cross on St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church. It had to be re-goldleafed, and Jim had been appointed to fetch that emblem of faith from its pinnacle on high. Father Reilly also hired Jim to paint the flag pole on St. Mary's parochial school. One afternoon before Jim had started on either job, he, rather intoxicated, went to Father Reilly to get \$10 in advance. To which the priest replied that he could have the money as soon as he had painted the flag pole. Jim painted the pole in a short time, got the \$10, and spent it carousing in the saloons.

The next morning his wife needed money. Jim told her he thought he knew where he could get \$10. So he went to the parochial school to paint the flag pole. When he saw the pole with a fresh coat of paint on it, he thought somebody else had done the work. In an angry mood he went to the priest's door. There was a bell and a knocker. Jim used the knocker and used it hard. Father Reilly came to the door, clothed in his priestly robes. Evidently he had just said Mass.

"What kind of a priest are you, anyway?" bawled

out Jim. "Here you gave me a job to paint that flag pole, and now you get somebody else to do it!"

The priest looked at Jim in an astonished manner.

"What's the matter with you, you little whipper-snapper?" cried the irate priest, as he towered above Jim. "What, are you trying to put one over on me? Do you mean to say you can't remember painting that flag pole yesterday? Come with me!"

He took Jim across the street and showed him his gear and paint pots under the stairs inside of the school.

"Oh!" spoke up Jim. "I wondered where these were. Well, ya ain't mad are ya?"

"No, nothing like that," replied the priest in a good-natured tone.

"Well, I'll come over in a day or two and take the cross down," said Jim.

"No, you won't!" contradicted the priest. "You're apt to take it down, put it somewhere, and forget all about it. You'll do no more work for me!"

This was a great financial loss for Jim, because the completed work would have brought \$250. Jim never did any more work for Father Reilly.

After many arrests, Jim left Lawrence for Boston: from Boston they moved to Pawtucket, Rhode Island. It was a little over a month after he had been there, that he was arrested, one afternoon, for showing a group of curious boys how to climb a telephone pole. Drunk, he had removed his coat and shoes, and was merrily going up the pole, when an officer came along

on a bicycle, and arrested him. After that he gave away his furniture and moved to Providence.

One morning, after carousing all night, Jim wanted his wife to give him more money for booze. Hattie knew better. There was an argument. Now it happened that on the sidewalk beneath, an officer was awaiting to arrest Jim. That officer had been given a beating by Jim some time before, and Jim had taken away his billy and badge in a brawl. There was a stack of dishes on the sill of the window over the sidewalk. Carleton accidentally knocked them off, and they landed squarely on the officer's head. Thinking that Jim had purposely assaulted him, he ran up the stairs to put Jim under arrest. Jim gave him one look, and then told him to get out or he would throw him out.

"You've got no business in my house without a warrant!" shouted Jim at the fleeing officer.

Jim, in the cities and towns where he went, got the name of "The Fighting Brute," because it usually took more than one officer to arrest him. He always fought like a demon.

But that officer got the reserves in a patrol wagon. In the fight that followed, the stove, table, chairs, and other furniture were overturned. In the hall, where the policemen finally pulled him, Jim grabbed hold of an iron banister, and it was about an hour before the four officers made him let go. After they got him in the patrol, Jim broke loose and ran a block before he was caught. Finally, bruised from head to foot, he was put in a cell, but towards morning he was transferred to the Rhode Island Hospital.

After a five-day vacation there, he was taken to court. The judge threatened to send him to jail, but Jim told the judge that if he were sent to jail, he would later sue the State for the damage the officers had done to him. Because of his broken back, Jim was let off free. For about a year Jim moved from house to house in Providence. He was arrested quite frequently. He was finally arrested for fighting with his brother-in-law, and was told by the judge that he would have to leave the State. The Parkers moved to Brockton, where they stayed until the number of Jim's arrests forced him to leave the city again. In New Haven, after he had decorated the Armory for a Yale University affair, he was summoned to the Yale Campus, where some clever student had hung on the top of a flag pole an immense piece of household crockery. The students stood around and jeered as Jim went up the pole to get it down again.

He then went to New York City, and soon sent for his family. In that city he painted the flag pole on Tammany Hall.

On rainy days Jim had a favorite trick which aggravated some of the New York City street car motor-men, and pleased others. He had a habit of stopping an electric car, reaching in the vestibule, lighting a match on the wood-work, and exclaiming, "This is the only dry spot in New York! Thank you for the accommodation. I wanted to light my pipe." Some conductors would laugh; others saw red.

Sometimes Jim's wife followed him, to keep him

out of the barrooms. But if Jim saw her near him, he would jump on a trolley car when it was moving, leaving her far in the rear. Often she went with him into restaurants, where he was apt to order ham and eggs for himself, and whatever his wife wanted. Many a time the man behind the counter got a fried egg in the face, thrown by the hand of Jim Parker, who thought it was not cooked properly. And many a time Mrs. Parker saved her husband from getting arrested.

Jim moved to Jersey City again. He had to paint the flag poles and clock for Mr. Austin Colgate. While working on that job, his mother, who had never stopped praying for him, took sick, died, and was buried. At the time, Jim was so intoxicated that he did not realize what had happened. Finally, after her burial, he was notified of the sad event, and hastened to Whitman — but reached there too late. He found out that the day of her burial the stores and banks of Whitman had closed to do her honor. She had given her life in unselfish endeavor for her Christ and her fellow creatures.

The Parkers again moved — to Hoboken, New Jersey; but soon after returned to Jersey City. One day Jim invited a fellow whom he had met in a bar-room to his house. Carleton had a kitten which he liked very much, but which the drunken newcomer did not like. The fact was, Jim's friend hated the sight of the cat so much that he threw it out of the window. Now Jim loved his son, and his son's possessions. So he took the man and threw him out of the window after the kitten.

Again the Parkers moved; this time to Bayonne, New Jersey. After about a month there, they went to New York City, and from there to Bridgeport, Connecticut. There, one time, he got the job of repairing a chimney. Drunk, he put up the ladders for the work, collected \$50 for the initial operation, and spent it for drink. The next day, he was surprised to see the ladders up. He had forgotten his work of the previous day; his pay, too, had melted away.

From Bridgeport they went to Milford, Connecticut, where Jim was finally arrested for disturbing the peace and sentenced to the New Haven jail for eighteen days. After that the family moved back to Jersey City. A month passed there, and Jim left his family and went to work in Camden, New Jersey. When he came back to Jersey City, he returned to the rooms where he and his wife had lived. He had not been there long before a strange man walked in.

"What are you doing in my room?" asked Jim gruffly.

"What are you doing in my room?" queried the stranger just as gruffly.

"I'll throw you out if you don't get out!" shouted Jim.

A pitched battle followed. The landlady soon appeared on the scene and told Jim that during his absence she had put his wife and boy out in the street, and let the room to the other man and his wife. The next day Jim wandered about until he found a friend who told him where his wife and son were living. He

found them, and persuaded them to walk with him to Rochester, New York. So they took a ferry to New York City, and, almost penniless, they then started their long hike. Jim happened to get a job (before they had gone far) putting a rope on a flag pole and then painting it. That night, after a long walk, they laid themselves down on the banks of the Hudson, between Yonkers and Hastings. They had just settled down to a nice sleep when along came the night boat and flashed its searchlight on them, waking them up. Again they were off to dreamland, when along came a train beside the river — from Albany. It blew its whistle, and again awoke the sleepers. For a third time they relaxed and slept, but for a third time they were awakened. It was an automobile stalled on the State road nearest them. A young couple in the car were drinking and swearing. Finally they started their machine again, and the Parkers settled down to a good night's sleep.

The next day they continued their journey. Carleton begged from the farmers whose homes they passed. He received fruits and vegetables, which kept him and his parents from hunger. They walked through Ossining and almost to Beacon when a man in a Ford truck stopped, took them in, and carried them nearly to Peekskill. It was dark when they reached Peekskill. They could not find a room where they could stay over night. Since Jim had spent most of his money on liquor, they had no funds with which to hire a room. They plodded to the heights above Peekskill,

and went to sleep on the ground. But that night it rained between three and four o'clock in the morning. They arose, returned to the city, and walked the streets until morning. Jim got a job there painting a small pole; after which, they again started walking.

They were about three miles from Cold Springs, when they settled down on the ground to sleep. Along came a farmer with his cow. He told them that Cold Springs was only a little ways ahead — and they could get rooms there if they could walk that far. The road led through the mountains. Not a light brightened the way. Mrs. Parker told her husband and son that she could walk no more. Her feet were blistered. However, she finally summoned up courage, and even led the trio as they made their way to Cold Springs. When they reached that city, they could not find the rooms of which the farmer spoke. So they spent the night beside the road in a clump of bushes near the city. The next day they reached Wappangers Falls, about seven miles from Poughkeepsie. They came into town just as it was getting dark, and just as it was starting to rain. Jim stopped a man who was walking along the street, and asked him where he could find lodgings for the night. The stranger replied that all the hotels were filled up and there wasn't a vacant room in town, since the following Monday was Labor Day. However, he told Jim that he and his family could put up at a shanty where he was working.

"Where is this shanty?" asked Jim.

"In a cemetery, where I am caretaker," replied the stranger.

Jim told his friend to tell Mrs. Parker that it was a factory shanty rather than a cemetery shanty. This the stranger did, adding that he was the night watchman of the factory. At the time, it was pitch dark, and the rain was pouring down hard. Finally they reached the cemetery, and the caretaker locked the Parkers in the shanty for the night.

The next morning Mrs. Parker nearly swooned when she saw where she had been sleeping. There was no peace until the caretaker came and let them out. That was Sunday morning. They walked to Poughkeepsie, but there were no rooms there. However, Jim heard of a rescue mission. There he found a place for himself and his family. The rest of Sunday, and Labor Day, Jim spent sizing up the city for work. The next day he found three flag poles to paint. He worked there for two weeks. Then he heard that the lights on St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church needed fixing. Jim walked, with his wife and son, to the church. He left them sitting on the stone wall near the church, and went in to see the priest, who gave him the job. Jim waited until the clergyman had gone out for an afternoon stroll, and then went up to the sexton and asked for the new lights. The sexton gave him two bags — one full of good bulbs, and the other empty — to put the old ones in. Jim went up to the belfry. He noticed that the steeple was ornamented with fancy knobs about two feet apart.

These, however, were not made to climb, but to look at. Jim also noticed a pipe containing electric wires that ran from the belfry to the top of the spire. He slung the two bags over his shoulder and proceeded to the top without even putting any ropes up. He was not long in reaching his objective, and throwing his foot over the horizontal crossbar of the cross, he replaced all the old lights with new ones. The whole job took Jim about one half an hour. He waited around until the priest came back.

"What are you doing?" inquired the priest as he returned from his stroll. "Sizing up the job?"

"No," replied Jim. "I'm waiting for my money. The job's already done."

"What?" gasped the astounded religious. He went into the vestibule, turned the lights on, and then went out to look at the cross. Yes, all the lights were on. He repeated the operation four times before he was convinced. He then asked Jim how much money he wanted. Jim told him \$50.

"You can make money a d—n sight faster than I can collect it. Tell me how you got up there," asked the priest.

Jim told him.

"Well," said the priest, as he paid Jim the \$50, "I wouldn't go up that way for \$1000." And Jim wouldn't have, if he had been sober.

Through that job Jim received a big write-up in the newspapers. He soon saw the value of publicity. To newspaper men he said that he was the only silver-

hinged steeple jack known. He told of his experiences painting the famous Colgate clock, whose minute hand travelled twenty-three inches for every minute, and whose hands weighed about one ton each. Sometimes he exaggerated and one of his favorite fabrications was that the famous Dr. Lorenz, the noted Austrian surgeon, was the one who had operated on his back.

Through the newspapers Jim got a job in the Catskill Mountains. The Parker family boarded a boat for Kingston and Roundout. There Jim stopped off for two weeks and worked. The day he left, Jim got as drunk as could be and landed in Phoenicia in the Catskills with two quarts of whiskey. The Parker family secured rooms in one of the hotels across from the depot, but when the owners learned of Jim's character, he was given back his rent and put out. The three tried to get rooms elsewhere, but there were no rooms for them. After walking about for two or three hours, Mrs. Parker became thoroughly disgusted with her drunken husband. She took his bottle and smashed it against a stone wall. Jim made a leap for her, but she and her boy ran away from him — back to the depot, where the baggage master let them stay until the train came for Kingston. In the meantime Jim had been around the depot yelling at the top of his lungs. When Mrs. Parker and her son finally got on the train, Jim also boarded and went from car to car looking for them. Although he passed them, he did not recognize them. Thinking they had not taken

the train, Jim got off. Mrs. Parker and Carleton went back to Poughkeepsie, then to New York, and finally to Providence, where they stayed at the home of Mrs. Ida Thompson, Mrs. Parker's sister.

Jim remained in the Catskills, and finished working on the steeple of a Union Church. He did various other jobs, including work on a chimney, for which he earned \$300. After a month or so, however, he sobered sufficiently to realize that his wife had left him. He went to Poughkeepsie, filled himself with booze, and boarded the train for New York.

With lots of money in his pocket, but no food in his stomach, Jim went into the dining car, and told the waiter he was hungry and wanted something to eat.

"Have you got any beef stew?" he asked the waiter.

"Yes," replied the white-coated gentleman.

"Bring some!" ordered Jim.

But when the waiter came with the soup there was no bread, butter, and tea to go with it.

"Where is the bread and tea?" demanded Jim.

"You didn't order it," replied the waiter.

"I don't care what it costs, I want something to eat!" bawled Jim.

Then the waiter said something which angered him, and Jim said something that made the waiter angry. A fight followed. Two brakemen and a railroad policeman came on the scene, and finally hauled Jim into the baggage car where they put handcuffs on him. Now there happened to be one of the high officials on the train, who knew of Jim and his work.

Just before the train pulled into New York City, he went into the baggage car and persuaded the trainmen to let Jim go rather than turn him over to the New York police.

Jim was made free. He took a taxi from the station to the wharf, where he embarked for Providence. On the boat he kept drinking throughout the night.

The next day in Providence, he went about inquiring for his wife, telling people he met that he had a gun and was going to shoot her. During the course of the day he met his boy on the street, but did not recognize him. And Carleton did not dare to speak to his father. If he had, however, he might have received a part of the \$300 that Jim had in his pocket — for Jim had intended to give some money to his son. That night Jim was robbed of his watch and money, and ended up the evening by being arrested for disturbing the peace. The following day his wife, knowing what had happened, came to court and pleaded for him.

That bit of love touched Jim's heart, and he sought to make up with his wife. They went to housekeeping, but because of Jim's bad behavior, had to move from house to house. After three months Jim was arrested again. When the policemen came to get him, Jim threw out of the window on them a pot of soup and an oil stove. He was put on probation. A week later he was arrested again, but those particular officers were on good terms with Jim, and they let him off. But the probation officer found out about the affair and arrested Jim for breaking parole. He was brought

before Judge Gorham, and with a record of thirty-eight arrests in the State of Rhode Island behind him, Jim was sentenced as a common drunkard to serve six months on the state farm.

Then up spoke bold Jim, and informed the judge that the authorities ought to put a ball and chain on him, for he was a good climber, and would not under any consideration serve six months for drinking booze that the authorities had licensed dealers to sell. To which Judge Gorham replied:

“We have good keepers out there, and it is my duty to send you there. I guess they will keep you without a ball and chain on your leg.”

CHAPTER VIII

JAILS AND ADVENTURES

It was the twelfth of June in 1917 when James Parker, commonly known as "The Fighting Brute," was sent to the State Farm at Howard, Rhode Island. In his prison garments he had plenty of time to think of his past life, in which he had tried only to please himself. He had drunk well of the cup of self-realization and self-attainment — yet he was nothing. Through strong drink he had lost his parents; through strong drink he had lost his second child. Through strong drink his wife and son had become helpless and unhappy. Through strong drink he had wandered about from city to city, seeking rest but finding none.

Yet even in prison his spirit was defiant and unyielding. Although he had worked on scores of churches, although he had spoken to scores of priests and ministers, who must have smelled his fuming breath, none had asked him if he was a Christian, none had asked him to change his ways, none had pointed him to Jesus Christ. So Jim went from bad to worse.

It was July 25, 1917. In Providence the drums were beating and the soldier boys were parading, getting ready for the first great wartime draft. Out at

the prison, the warden came to Jim and told him that he had some rigging to do on the Insane Asylum near the farm. He had heard what a good man Jim was for that sort of work, and asked him if he would like to do the job. Jim said he rather chose to stay in solitary confinement, than do the work, because the people passing the asylum in their automobiles would see Jim in prison clothes — and some of them might be his customers. And then Jim would be disgraced. However, he told the warden that if he would get him a decent pair of overalls, a jumper, and a pair of shoes, he would gladly do the work required. At first the warden did not wish to do that — but after he found that nobody else was able to do the work at the asylum, he got some of his own clothes and a pair of his own slippers, and lent them to Jim. Jim put on his new outfit, and went with a guard by way of the prison wall to the other side of the street. There he began to put up the rigging on the asylum roof. Jim had placed a set of block and falls on the roof, when he noticed the guard going around the corner of the building to watch some other prisoners take the screens out of the cellar windows. Jim waited until the guard, who thought Jim would be safe on the roof, was out of sight. Then he hastily threw one leg around a hanging rope and slid down, hand over hand, to the ground. As fast as he could, he ran toward the corn field across the road. He had not been gone long before the guard discovered his disappearance. He shouted "Stop!"

But Jim ran all the faster. Then the guard fired five shots at Jim, but none of them hit him.

There was a new warning whistle at the State Farm, which had never been blown. Jim's escape necessitated its use for the first time. When Jim heard the whistling, he knew that the guards would take some time in rounding up the prisoners, for that was always done before the guards left to find a runaway. Jim ran through about a quarter of a mile of corn, then he broke off a limb from a nearby tree, to use as a club; and also picked up two big stones. He climbed a tall pine tree, where nobody could see him from the road. The siren kept on blowing. Jim had a chance to think of eleven others, who, during the short time he had been on the farm, had tried to escape — but had been unsuccessful. Some had been caught sneaking through the woods. Others had been foolish enough to go back home to get clothes. Jim saw the two hundred and seventy-seven other prisoners brought in. He saw the guards rush out with guns, search the corn field, and then circle around the very tree where he was hiding. Happily for them, not one of them looked up into the branches, for if one had, Jim would have thrown a stone at him. Jim heard them talking excitedly. One would say:

“He must be in the corn.”

“He can't be; we've gone all over it. Maybe he's gone down toward the boys' or girls' school!” another would reply.

While they were jabbering away in that manner,

Mr. Perkins, the superintendent, drove up in his automobile, swearing and raving. He got out and came up to the men, for it was he who had lent Jim his overalls, jumpers and slippers. He sent the men off in pairs. He and the deputy said they would go to Jim's home. They were almost half an hour making plans. Meanwhile Jim was making his plans. From the tree he noticed that the superintendent had not assigned anybody to the State road, which headed toward the railroad, leading out of the State of Connecticut. At the farm Jim had learned the lay of the land from other prisoners, and had found how to go to get out of the State.

Jim got down from the pine tree, and cautiously went through the woods in the opposite direction to which any of the guards had taken. He hadn't gone long before he saw two farmers in the distance, but he didn't show himself to them, because there was a five-dollar reward for the return of any escaped prisoner. Jim hurried to the back of the Saconosset School for Boys, and nearly came in sight of a group of boys and a guard there. Finally, off in another direction, Jim reached a meadow and swamp. There he planned to hide himself until night, when the farmers would be out of his way. But the mosquitoes were so thick that Jim could not stand swamp life. Finally, he circled around to where the farmers were working. He bent down and went along by a stone wall, but when he reached the end of that, he took a chance, walked through the clearing, came to the road, and reached

the railroad track he had been heading for. Near the track was a white cottage with closed green blinds. Jim noticed a big two-chair swing on the piazza. He then went up to the door, rang the bell, and if anybody had answered, he planned to ask for a drink of water. When no one answered the noise, Jim sat down in the swing. There he made himself comfortable. Several people passed the house, and Jim spoke to all of them with a remark.

"Too bad the boys had to go away," Jim would say, referring to the parade in Providence, or "an awfully hot day." The people who owned the white house had probably gone away to the parade. Jim then took his prison cap and turned it inside out. With a nail he punched some holes in the peak of the visor, and with a thread which he took from his pants, he tied it down to make it look like a regular cap.

About five o'clock Jim started to hike to the State line. Swinging his arms, he walked as naturally as he could. He had a map that some of his comrades in prison had helped him draw. He knew that he would have to go through River Point, and Washington, and along that way. He soon met a policeman, but instead of running, Jim went up and asked him for a match. Policemen were not on the lookout for such fugitives. Soon after he met another officer of the law.

"Too bad the boys had to go away, ain't it," Jim told the officer.

Again Jim was confronted by a cop. He said the

same thing he did to the last one, only he added, "War is a terrible thing. I hope they win," and with that went on.

Although all policemen had been notified to arrest Jim if they saw him, none did so. One even went so far as to go across the street to a confectionery store to buy a box of matches and give it to Jim — after he had made the request for a light. Jim walked all that night, until he reached the State line. It was about six o'clock in the morning when Jim tossed up his hat into the air and shouted:

"Good-bye, Rhode Island, for life!" Jim hadn't had anything to eat or drink since he had left jail the day before, but nevertheless, he kept on walking. About eight o'clock a big truck from Providence came rolling up. It contained a skylight for some building. The two men knew Jim, and stopped.

"Thought you were in jail," said one.

"I was up until yesterday morning, but I didn't like the quarters, so I jumped," replied Jim.

"Where are ya goin'?" questioned the other.

"To New London, and from there to New York," replied Jim.

"Jump on! We'll give you a ride as far as Norwich."

When they reached that city, which was not far from New London, they asked Jim to help them put up the skylight. Jim did, and was paid a dollar. After almost six weeks without alcohol, he bought some drinks, and then boarded a car for New London. On the car he struck up a conversation with a lightship

tender, who was going to New London to get his ship. Jim told how he got away from jail. The friend seemed to sympathize with the escaped man, and even went so far as to ask:

"Would you like a drink?"

"Sure!" exclaimed Jim without hesitation.

The stranger pulled out a pint bottle of whiskey. They were sitting in the back of the car, where they would not be noticed. Jim took the bottle and hastily drank two thirds of it. He then passed it to the stranger, who gave Jim a queer look, and said:

"I guess you were dry, weren't you?"

"I guess you'd be if you'd been where I was the last month and eleven days," was Jim's reply.

They reached New London. The stranger treated Jim to more booze, gave him fifty cents with which to buy food and pay for a night's lodging, and told him where he could get a bed for twenty-five cents. Then they parted.

Jim happened to look up on the roof of the Mohican Hotel, where he saw three men trying to put a halyard in the flag pole. Jim walked into the hotel and asked the manager:

"What are you trying to do, have those men commit suicide up there?"

"No," said the man, "They are trying to get up a flag to half mast."

"Well," said Jim, "that's my job. I'm a steeple jack. I can go up the pole without a ladder."

"How much will you do the job for?"

"Ten dollars," replied Jim.

The speaker went in conference with another man, who said:

"All right. We're glad to get somebody to do it. Come on up."

Upon the roof, Jim made his own apparatus, and in five minutes had done the work required. When he had finished, one with authority asked:

"As long as you're here, what will you paint it for?"

"Another ten dollars, as long as you furnish the paint. And," added Jim, "I'll tell you I just got away from jail yesterday morning, and I haven't eaten since then. If you give me something to eat, perhaps I'll do a better job."

Jim was given a good meal, and that same afternoon he painted the flag pole. After he was paid twenty dollars, he gave seven for a second-hand suit, and sent three to his wife in Providence. He told her not to say anything to the police, who had been around her house since Jim's escape. He went to the mission which his friend had told him of, and changed his clothes. Then he had a neat bundle made out of the Rhode Island State Prison clothes, and sent it to the prison by Adams Express, C. O. D.

Inside Jim had enclosed the prison garments, and a note, saying:

"Dear Sir: You can have these back as I will have no more use for them. Since you have a son my size, you can give him my new suit, since I do not believe I will ever call for it. I will keep the overalls, jumpers, and slippers, as I can use them in my business. Yours, James A. Parker."

The package was addressed to the superintendent, from whom Jim had borrowed his overalls, jumpers, and slippers.

Jim sailed to New York that following night. There he painted the flag poles on the Colgate building again. It was Mr. Austin Colgate who first called Jim "Steeple Jim" and honored him by putting a picture of him, painting the famous Colgate Clock, in the catalogue which the company sent to all its customers.

Jim was thoughtful enough to send more money home to his wife. After a few days in New York City, he took a boat to Poughkeepsie. The first day he was there he got drunk, and went up to an officer to ask him:

"Where was the big fellow that was here a year ago?"

"You don't know what you're talking about. You'd better go on your business, and I'll go on mine," said the officer.

But as the officer turned his back, Jim, who felt insulted, hit him a blow with his fist behind his ear. The policeman, who was a big man, tusseled with Jim, and finally got the drunkard's head under his arm. Squeezing Jim's neck until he nearly choked, he took him to the Police Station. The next morning Jim stood up in front of the judge, who told the drunkard to put up his right hand. But Jim's right hand was so wobbly with the shakes, that he could hardly keep it up. The judge noticing that Jim had been drinking quite heavily, said:

"I guess you'll need five days to sober up." So Jim was sent away to serve five days in the Dutchess County Jail.

Now Jim didn't like the conditions in that jail. In the morning and for the evening meal he was given dry bread and coffee, and every noon was served bean soup without any beans. Besides the poor food, the men were in a common room during the day, and fought for the bunks at night. Drunks with *delirium tremens* were put in among the rest, and sometimes they created disturbances. Once, a newcomer was let in, and, on seeing Jim, swore Jim was his wife. At night he looked under Jim's bed for her, vowing that if he found her he would kill her. The affair ended by Jim beating the man with a broom stick. Guards came and finally had to put the man in a straight jacket. There was another fellow who had been pardoned for killing his wife, and let free from the State Prison a few weeks before. After a fight with policemen, he was admitted to Jim's quarter in a terrible condition — his face was cut up and covered with blood. Most of the prisoners knew him and were afraid of him, showing their fear by keeping as far away from him as they could. Jim had been beaten up in his past days so much that he pitied the newcomer, who was mad-drunk. Instead of keeping away from him, though, Jim went up to him, got him to go over to the sink, and there washed his face. The stranger made friends with Jim, for Jim knew no fear, even of murderers.

The last day of Jim's sentence came. At noontime

the "trusty" brought in the bean soup without the beans. In Jim's plate was a large bone. Jim smacked his lips as he thought of the meat he was going to get. Hastily he picked it out of his dish, but lo, he found that meat and gristle had all been gnawed off of the bone — he could see the prints of the teeth. Without hesitation, Jim shouted to the "trusty":

"Hey — wait a minute! I'm going out of here tonight, and I want to tell you something! Come back here!"

Jim made believe that he was going to tell the man a secret. The expectant "trusty" drew closer and closer to the bars. Almost as quick as lightning, Jim give him a sharp blow on the head with the big bone.

"I might be a drunk," roared Jim, "but I'm not a dog!"

"Help! Murder!" yelled the "trusty."

The keeper came running up to find out what was the matter. Now Jim knew that the jail keepers got paid a certain amount for every meal that was given to the prisoners. He also knew that the inmates were not getting what they deserved — that there was graft somewhere. Up spoke Jim to the keeper:

"Here! Do you see that?" Jim showed him the bone. "Wait until I get out of here! I'll have a story for the newspapers! This is the rottenest dump in the whole United States, and I've been in all of them. Why, there ain't been a whole bean in the soup the five days I've been here — and then they add insult by putting in dog bones!"

The keeper called up others, to find out whether those things were true or not. Some showed plates of soup, showing that most of the beans had been taken out and eaten by the "trusties," while the prisoners, who had been confined for drinking what the State had licensed men to sell, were given almost dish water. The keeper turned on the "trusty" and gave him a sound thrashing. He spoke to Jim.

"I'd have killed the dirty dog if it had been me. You did just right. It's bad enough for a man to be locked up here, without standing that sort of abuse."

The next morning, at seven o'clock, Jim was released.

Jim had agreed to paint the flag poles on some of the school houses and fire houses in Poughkeepsie. While in jail he had sent word to the city alderman to help him get out, but the alderman had not tried to help. That man, Mr. Downs, met Jim on the street, and spoke to him, saying:

"I've got the paint all ready. Whenever you want to you can start in on the poles."

"I'm starting," replied Jim. "But I'm starting for Newburgh. I've had all I want of this city. Why, I'd paint the flag poles and they'd arrest me again and fine me all I would have made out of the job. I guess I'll get out while the getting's good."

The alderman said nothing. Jim went down to the barroom, drank his fill, and then bought a quart of whiskey. When he reached the wharf, he was too

early. But Jim gave the keeper a drink, telling him he wanted to get on board to keep out of trouble. After Jim had told of his jail experience, the keeper let him on the Newburgh boat. The watchman and Jim drank up the whole quart of whiskey, and Jim sent his friend on shore to buy more.

Along about four o'clock in the afternoon, the boat left dock for Newburgh. Jim had about \$150 with him, and two suitcases: one full of clothes, and the other full of his steeple jacking apparatus. When the boat docked at Newburgh, Jim headed for a barroom. After having a few drinks, he left his two suitcases, telling the bartender he would call for them after he had hired a room. The bartender heard that Jim was a steeple jack, and told him there was a flag pole at a park called "Washington's Headquarters" where Jim could probably get a job. Jim hurried to the park and found that the rope had broken off of one end of the flag, and it couldn't be taken down. Jim promised to do the job the next morning, and in return was promised \$25.

After a night in a lodging house, Jim remembered his agreement about the suitcases. But when he went to the barroom, the tender denied all knowledge of any suitcases. But when the room was searched nothing was seen of them. Although Jim had money, he did not want to buy new rigging. So he went up to the Masonic Temple, told the custodian that his brother was a Mason, and after a "hard luck" story got the necessary boards and ropes. He went to the

Park, and inside of twenty-five minutes he had taken in the flag and collected his \$25.

Jim then went over to the hat factory to look for work. There he got acquainted with a man who knew his brother, Bill. Jim made an appointment to meet his friend that night. When night came on, they did meet, and with them a rough group of hat workers. Now hatters shifted from one city to another, making good money, but spending much of it for booze. Jim and the hatters went from barroom to barroom, drinking, swearing, and making nuisances of themselves. Finally they arrived at the bar where Jim's two suit cases had been stolen. Thompson, the leader of the group, ordered:

"Set 'em up for the crowd."

The bartender filled up enough glasses to go around. Then Jim recognized the proprietor as the man who had cheated him. The boys were about to drink, when Jim interrupted.

"Wait a minute, boys! Before you drink that, I want to tell you something!"

The bartender looked up. Jim continued:

"What do you think of a dirty skunk that will go to work and say he will take care of a man's clothes and tools for him while he goes to get a room — and then when he comes back after them, says he didn't leave them there? Well, that's what this guy done to me! And I wouldn't take a drink of his poison if he'd give me the bar. And not one of you is a friend of mine if you do — now or hereafter!"

When Jim finished his speech there was a great deal of shouting.

"That's the boy! You're right!" one said. Then they all turned, went out of the barroom, leaving the drinks unpaid for and untouched on the bar. The tender said nothing, for he had nothing to say.

Jim stayed at Newburgh for a few days — working, yes, but spending all of his earnings on booze.

One Monday morning he started in walking to Kingston. He had gone some distance when a government agent, a Liberty Bond salesman, gave him a ride in his automobile. Jim told a "hard luck" story — how he had been robbed, and more lies, which so touched the heart of the man that he gave him fifty cents when they arrived in Kingston. Jim saw a flag pole with a rope out of it. He went over to see if he could get the job of replacing the rope. Yes, he did, and not only that but he was hired to paint the pole. This he did in about fifteen minutes, and collected five dollars. He also painted the Electric and Gas Company's smokestacks, and did other similar work. He was good enough to send his wife home some money — by telegraph, but he did not write to her. He was too lazy.

Jim went to New York City, and a little later to Newark, where he rented rooms and sent for his wife and boy. They had been with him for about a month, when Jim was arrested in a restaurant. After he had complained to the manager about a steak, which he thought was not well done, an argument followed.

Jim tore the shirt off the proprietor, and shoved the steak in his face. Jim was released from jail the next morning.

They moved to another part of the city. There Jim got the contract to paint two smokestacks for the Mueller Macaroni Company in Jersey City. But before Jim started on that work, he fought with his landlady's son. In the *mêlée* they rolled down the stairs. The police were summoned, and arrested the fighters. The next morning, when they were brought up before the judge, the boy told the judge that Jim was an ex-convict. Conrad was let go, but Jim was held by the New Jersey authorities as a fugitive from justice. After ten days, word came back from the Rhode Island authorities, saying that if the New Jersey authorities had that crazy fighting steeple jack, Jim Parker, they could keep him, for Rhode Islanders were only too glad to have the charge of jail breaking against him to keep him out of the State, and Rhode Island had had some peace since he had been gone.

After this reply Jim was discharged. He hastened to Jersey City to paint the two stacks for the Mueller Macaroni Company. When he reached their factory, he saw two men painting the stacks. But Jim had the contract in his pocket, so he boldly walked into the office to see Mr. Mueller himself. In a loud voice Jim spoke to him:

"What kind of business do you think this is? I came over here this morning to paint these stacks, and

I see others doing my work. Now I have the contract here and you're going to pay for it. It's immaterial to me whether I do the work or not!"

"Those men are working for you," retorted Mr. Mueller. "They told me that you were in St. Louis, and that you had sent them to do the job."

"I couldn't very well have been in St. Louis," admitted Jim frankly. "I have just got out of the Essex County Jail."

"You get in back of that door there!" said Mr. Mueller. "I'm going to call those fellows in and find out about this."

So he called them in. They were the landlady's son, and a boarder. They, thinking that Jim had been sent to Rhode Island to finish his sentence there, had proceeded to take over Jim's work and money. In came the two young men.

"You're doing this work for Parker?" inquired Mr. Mueller of the two.

"Yes," replied Leslie Conrad, the one who had told the judge of Jim's former unfinished jail term.

"Well," went on Mr. Mueller, "I suppose you understand that I can't give you any money when the job is done. According to the contract, I pay him."

"Oh," chirped in Leslie, "he told us to collect when we got done. That'll be all right."

"Come here, Mr. Parker!" loudly spoke Mr. Mueller. Jim stepped out from behind the door. One seemed amazed; the landlady's son put on a bold front.

"Did you tell these men that?" Mr. Mueller inquired of Jim.

Leslie tried to bluff it out. The other, though, admitted that it had been a put-up game.

Now Jim was good hearted. He could have had the whole \$50. But he told the two boys that if they wished to finish the job (which was nearly done) they could have half of the money. They agreed. Jim sat down and watched them work, and as soon as it was done, he gave them \$25, and he kept the rest.

It was not long after this that Jim and his family went to visit a Mrs. Ayer, who was a janitress they knew on Montgomery Street, Jersey City. The quarters were cramped, so that Jim and his wife had to sleep on a couch-bed in the kitchen. This was a couch in the daytime, and a double bed at night.

One night at 2 A. M. Jim rose in his sleep and went up three flights of stairs. He was mounting the ladder to the skylight on the roof, when one of the men who had hired an apartment in the building, came out in the corridor and saw him. He did not know that Jim was staying in the apartment, so he called another fellow. One of them questioned Jim.

"What are you going up there for?"

"To paint a flag pole," replied Jim.

The two men told him they'd see about that. They easily led him down stairs to the front door. One got a policeman, who, when he arrived, focused his flash light on Jim, and recognized him.

"What are you doing here, Jim?" said the officer.

Jim was in a drunken, dazed condition.

"I'm going to paint a flag pole, I guess. I don't know — where am I, anyway?"

"Where are you staying tonight?" inquired the policeman.

"With Mrs. Ayer, 247 Montgomery Street," replied Jim.

"What part of the house does she live in?" further questioned the policeman.

"The basement. She's janitress. I guess I must have got up in my sleep and wandered away."

"This is 247," said the officer. "Come on down into the basement."

The policeman led Jim into the basement, and over to the couch where Hattie was sleeping. He took his club and tickled her ribs. "Do you know this man?" he said.

In a fright Mrs. Parker woke up. "No!" she replied, "I don't know him. What are you doing in here? Get out of here. Where's Jim?"

The policeman laughed.

"You'd better wake up, Mrs. Parker. This is Jim. He's some worker. He even wanted to work in his sleep." And then, pointing to the two men who had captured Jim, he added, "If it hadn't been for these men, here, he might have got up on the roof and fallen off. He was going to paint the flag pole. You better tie him down for the rest of the night if you want to keep him here."

"It's all right, gentlemen," he said speaking directly

to the two strangers. "This man is the most famous steeple jack in the country. He is the only one to have painted Colgate's clock. You've heard of him, haven't you?"

"Yes," said one. "But it looked kind of funny at two o'clock in the morning."

Then Jim got dressed, and all four men went out. Together they went to an allnight barroom, where Jim treated them all to drinks. The compliments he had received from the policeman had gone to his head. The bartender was told the story, and he laughed as hard as the rest of them. The party broke up when dawn was breaking.

For a period Jim worked for the Government on the Erie Railroad. Then he was sent to Blairstown to paint a smokestack. He also worked there on a church. One morning, rather drunk, he climbed the spire with a full bottle on his hip. When night had come on, Jim had consumed all his drinks, and started to get down again on the ground. There were two ropes to be taken into consideration: by cutting the one he would be let down onto a small ledge; the other suspended Jim on the steeple. He drew the blade of his knife and cut the wrong rope. He started to fall through space. Immediately realizing his danger, he made a wild lunge for the building, and by chance, with the tips of his fingers caught hold of a window sill — after he had fallen about ten feet. He held his grip, and workers below soon saw him dangling in the

air. After ten minutes a rope was lowered from above. Jim clutched it, and was hauled to safety. But both of his shoulder muscles were torn loose, and for weeks Jim lay in bed — helpless. At last he recovered his strength and went back to his trade.

Down underneath a rough exterior, Jim had a good heart. One day in Newark, a fellow came up to him and said:

“I’m hungry. Will you stake me to a feed?” The poor man looked desperate, and the sight of him touched Jim’s heart.

“Sure,” replied Jim.

They went into a restaurant, where the man ordered a meal. Jim said he was in a hurry (it was about midnight) and wanted to pay for the food then. So he started to hand the restaurant man a five dollar bill. But the stranger, who probably craved alcohol more than he craved common food, snatched the bill from Jim’s hand and ran out of the door into the dark night. Jim had hold of a corner of the bill, which tore off and remained in his hand.

Jim ran after the thief, and overtook him near the Newark railroad. In under the terminal they clinched and fought. A nearby policeman rapped his night stick on the sidewalk. Four officers came up on the run and arrested the two. Jim told his story. They were taken back to the restaurant, where his sayings were confirmed. But both were kept in jail that night. The next morning, the judge told the beggar that he was the most ungrateful man he had

ever seen — to rob a man who was buying him something to eat. The judge then discharged Jim, but kept the thief for the grand jury. He also kept the torn five dollar bill as evidence, and Jim never saw it again. One robber got jailed; another got the five dollars.

CHAPTER IX

TEMPORARY REFORM

It was along in 1919. The Parkers were living in a house on Ann Street. When Jim went off on drunks, Mrs. Parker and her son were protected in the home of Mrs. Conrad, mother of the boy who had sought to defraud Jim of his job on the Mueller chimneys. Hattie, who had grown old, through the cares and troubles of life, worked in Mrs. Conrad's lodging house. Jim had grown fiendish, and even sometimes drove his son to the streets to pick up cigar and cigarette butts, so that he could save his tobacco money for booze. One morning, in a rage, Jim said to his wife:

"If you go up to that woman's house again, when you come back, you won't find any home to come to!"

Jim went out and drank all morning. In the afternoon he returned, and found that his wife had gone over to Mrs. Conrad's. Jim hurried to a Jew's second hand furniture store and told the proprietor:

"I'll sell you a house full of furniture for \$2.50, provided that you will move it out in one half an hour!"

Of course, the trader seized the opportunity, in spite of the fact that Carleton tried to prevent him from accomplishing his purpose. The boy, when he saw that his pleading was of no avail, went home, got his

mother's clothes and belongings together, and took them to Mrs. Conrad's. About the same time, the second hand furniture man sent down a truck with four men, and in less than a half hour they had taken all the Parker furniture. Jim went off to spend the money for liquor, telling his boy that if he found Hattie he'd surely kill her.

July passed. Mrs. Parker and her son lived at Mrs. Conrad's, where she worked hard to earn a living for herself and her child. Jim plied his trade, but kept drinking all the time, kept getting into trouble, and was arrested time after time. August and September slipped by, and still Jim vowed he would kill his wife; and still Hattie kept far away from her drunkard husband.

One Sunday afternoon, along the first of October, Jim was walking along the street toward some bar-room. He hadn't any money, but he knew the bartenders would trust him for any amount, for Jim always paid his bills. Also, bartenders knew that if they refused to trust Jim, that madman would wreck their barrooms. Jim was headed for "The Orange Cafe," a most disreputable place, on Orange Street, where men and women of the convict class gathered. Jim was not feeling very happy, for his elbow had been broken again, and pus flowed freely from it. He hadn't worked for quite a while, but had been drinking and fighting all along, until physically he was a wreck.

With his face cut, his clothes and skin covered with

dirt and paint, and half drunk, he was crossing Military Park, when his attention was attracted by an open air meeting. It was being conducted by the Y. M. C. A. An ex-convict by the name of Harry Haines was speaking to the multitude. Jim heard him tell how the police had knocked fourteen teeth out — Jim, too, had had many of his teeth knocked out by the police — the man interested him! He pushed up closer to view the speaker, and hear his words.

Harry Haines told how he had been a burglar since his early boyhood — how he had grown to be so expert that he could open a safe by touch. He had served fourteen years in the prisons of the eight States where he had been convicted. Then came a big burglary of \$106,000. He had placed that money in different banks, under different names, while he hid from the police for a time in an apartment. There were warrants in the eight states, where he had committed crime, for his arrest, dead or alive. Then, while he was hiding, a strange thing happened. Harry Haines heard music from the street. The Eighth Avenue Mission of New York City was conducting an open air service. Harry Haines heard hymns of Jesus, the Only Begotten Son of the Father, and Saviour of the world. He heard the speeches — simple, plain, direct, testimonies for Jesus. The cold, stone heart of Harry Haines broke down. Finally, on another occasion, he had courage enough to leave his hiding place and go to the open air meeting, to stand with the rest

of the crowd. And after the open air meeting he followed them into a mission hall. There he heard other hymns and speaking. Someone was bold enough and obedient enough to Jesus to ring out a challenge to those in the audience to repent and accept Christ as their Saviour. The light shone in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended the light; for then, Harry Haines, a rank criminal, was born again. He stepped to the front of the hall, and accepted Christ as his Saviour. After the meeting he told the officials his story, and asked their advice. They told him to spend the next day in prayer. So the next day Harry Haines spent on his knees in communion with God.

After that day of prayer, Harry felt that God had commanded him to return what money he could, and then serve what jail terms there were demanded of him, to satisfy the law. So he took out of the banks the \$106,000 he had deposited under different names, and sent all he could to various firms whom he had victimized, favoring the ones whom he thought most needed the money. Of course, he took a great chance of being caught when he withdrew the money. By the time he had mailed as much as he could, he had seventy-five cents left, which he threw into the tamborine of a Salvation Army lassie. With a "God bless you," he thanked the Father that he had got rid of all the stolen money.

He had, however, reserved five cents, and with that made a telephone call to Inspector Burns of Head-

quarters, New York City. When he was connected with that official, he spoke these words: "You are looking for Harry Haines, the burglar? Well, I'm going to give him to you. I got converted the night before last in the Eighth Avenue Mission. Tomorrow morning at nine o'clock I'll walk into your office and give myself up. I'm going to spend this evening with my friends at the Eighth Avenue Mission. This will probably be the last night I'll spend with friends for a long while. I'm telling you this so that I will not be bothered by officers, but can come out in the open a few hours a clean man."

At eight o'clock that night, Harry Haines walked into the mission and went forward among the converts. Two plain clothed policemen arose from the back of the hall, and, approaching him, asked if he was Harry Haines.

"Yes, and who are you?" said Harry.

"We are two headquarters men," one replied.

"I told Inspector Burns that I would be down tomorrow morning and give myself up. He has never known me to break my word, although I have broken many safes. Now I fore-warned him in order to have a few hours with these new friends that God has given me. You men know what's my reputation, and if you try to take me now, I will either kill you or you me!"

"You will give us your word," said the spokesman for the police, "that you will be down to headquarters in the morning, Harry?"

"Yes," said Harry.

"That's good enough for us."

The policemen left. After a night of worship and praise, Harry Haines went down to headquarters and gave himself up. They buffeted him and knocked out his teeth, to try to get him to tell where his pals were hidden. But Harry didn't feel that God had called him to be a tattle tale. Policemen's brutality could not break the iron will of Harry Haines, and the policemen soon found that out.

As Harry continued with his story, Jim grew more and more interested. He drew closer and closer, to see a man with such courage. Harry then told how he had served all his sentences in jail. Finally released a free man, he went about preaching the Gospel of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who had released him and made him free from destruction.

While standing listening, drunken Jim, with his cut face, his three-weeks' beard, and dirty painty body, experienced a new sensation. Then, as Harry Haines concluded his story, a heavy man, who must have weighed over two hundred pounds, approached Jim. His face seemed to shine with light. He put his big hand on Jim's shoulder, and said:

"You see, my lad, it doesn't pay to serve the devil as well as the speaker, there, has done in the past, and as you are doing now."

Jim looked up and snarled a wolfish, mean snarl. He would have struck an ordinary man. But he was awed by the compelling face of this man, and he waited to hear what the stranger had to say to him.

The stranger continued. He told how he, too, had once been a drunkard, and how God had purged him of his passion for liquor. Some friends had sent him to Chester Crest, a home for inebriates at Mount Vernon, New York. There he had been converted, and had later become a director of that institution.

And then Jim's cold heart melted. Somehow he began to tell the stranger his troubles, a thing which he had never done before to any man. The stranger responded with sympathy, and finally said:

"You stay with me until after this meeting. Then we'll go and get something to eat. I want to have a good talk with you."

After the meeting, they both left for the Y. M. C. A. dining hall. At the door, a man stopped Jim, but the stranger got him by. There, among neatly dressed people of polite society, Jim ate a hearty meal. Jim found out that his newly won friend was Mr. James Fife, one of the largest coffee merchants in the city. At the table there, Mr. Fife presented to Jim the proposition that he go to Chester Crest and take a six-weeks' treatment, which consisted of good clean living, going to bed early, eating plenty of fresh eggs and vegetables, and praying and trusting God. Jim thought those things over. He thought that the religious part was all bosh — that God wouldn't have anything to do with him. But he did think it a fine opportunity to go there for a vacation, and get his pus-filled, broken elbow healed. He also thought of the good food and other luxuries that he hadn't had for many

months. But as for getting converted — bah — Jim couldn't be bothered — what would God care about him? So Jim promised Mr. Fife that he would go and take the treatment. They then went to a Salvation Army meeting, after which, Mr. Fife gave Jim fifty cents for something to eat and a night's lodgings. When Mr. Fife left, Jim wanted to spend the fifty cents for liquor, but because he had promised Mr. Fife he wouldn't, he didn't, even though he tried as hard as he could to forget the promise. So he went to a cheap lodging house to spend his night in sleep.

The next morning, following Mr. Fife's directions of the day before, Jim went down to the Y. M. C. A. and talked with a Mr. Miller, who gave Jim the business address of Mr. James Fife, and also the carfare to New York City. Thither Jim went, and there at the office of that fine wholesale coffee merchant, again Mr. Fife told Jim his story — of how he had himself been a drunkard, how his family had been almost broken up, and how he had been sent to Chester Crest, and finally had been converted and cured of drunkenness through kindness, good food, and the Gospel. Jim agreed to go there, and Mr. Fife got his promise that he'd stay there the whole six weeks, on which condition he gave Jim a card which admitted him to that institution. He also gave him the carfare to Mount Vernon.

Jim went to Chester Crest, Mount Vernon, New York. He sobered down after about a week. It had been the first voluntary sober week he had had for over

thirteen years — all the other times he had been shut off from drink either by sickness or jail. His broken elbow was dressed and cared for; he was given all the comforts a man could desire. Yet it was a miserable week for Jim. His brain began to clear and he thought of the terrible wrong that he had committed in treating his wife and child the way he had — by selling the furniture and putting them out into the street. It came over Jim that all the trouble had been his own fault, and not his wife's, because half of the time he had not left anything in the home for them to eat, nor money to buy food with. No wonder poor Hattie had to work hard for her meals at Mrs. Conrad's.

When he was going down to the hospital one day he saw a small smokestack that needed painting. He soon got the job and earned seven dollars. He then made arrangements to paint a smokestack for a laundry there, but did not do that. For after he had completed his first week at Chester Crest he determined to go back to Newark, find his wife and boy, and ask to be forgiven for the wrong that he had done. This he told the authorities at the sanitarium, and although they tried to persuade him to stay, his mind was made up, and they could not change it.

He went back to Newark, looked for his wife and boy, but could find them nowhere. Tired and discouraged, he yielded to that craving he so recently had decided to give up, and spent most of his seven dollars he had earned, for booze. He got drunk, and, as usual, got to fighting. That night he slept on a bench in

Military Park, where he remained until the next morning.

During the three months of their separation, Mrs. Parker had kept herself and her boy alive by doing general housework. She heard that Jim was back sober, and looking for her. So the next day she joyfully set out to find him. She came to Military Park, and way off, sitting dejectedly on a bench, was her Jim. Her heart beat fast as she hastened to greet him. But as she drew closer, her steps became slower. Poor Jim! His face was cut and bleeding; his eye was black and swollen; his collar and shirt were covered with blood; he looked like a monster rather than a man. She grew frightened and started to run. Then Jim saw her and shouted:

“Come on here! I’m not going to hurt you! Wha’z the matter?”

She retraced her steps and finally dared to sit on the end of the bench opposite Jim. They talked things over. Jim confessed he had been wrong. It had been the longest time since they had been married that they were separated. Finally they made up and decided to start over anew — to go to New York. The question came up — where would they get the carfare to go to New York City? Jim had not one cent of change. Mrs. Parker had \$1.23 — but she did not dare to let Jim lay his hands on it. She knew it would go for liquor if he got it. They went down to Mulberry Street, where Jim bought a paper collar and a five-cent

handkerchief. Then he went to an Italian barber's on Bank Street to get a shave, which cost him another five cents. The fare to New York from Newark was seventeen cents apiece. By the time they got to New York City, poor Mrs. Parker's money was nearly gone — for she had bought something to eat. Jim tried to persuade her to go back to Mrs. Conrad's, where the boy was staying, until he could get back on his feet again. But no, she said she would stand by him no matter what happened. Jim went to all the places he knew in New York City and Brooklyn looking for work. He was unsuccessful, for his personal appearance caused people to distrust him. They walked and they walked. About seven o'clock, they wandered down the Bowery, the place where the poorest classes, the criminals, the unfortunates, had their abode. It began to rain. Fears and worries beset the couple. At last Jim saw the sign of the Bowery Mission.

"Come in here out of the rain," said Jim to his wife. "They can't put us out, for it's a church. Maybe I can think of somebody I can go and get a dollar from."

They went in to the religious service, which was being held in the mission. Jim didn't listen much to what was sung or spoken — he was too ashamed of himself. He didn't dare to look anybody in the face — so great was his disgust. The meeting was soon over. But before the Parkers arose from their seats, a woman had come down and said in a kindly voice to Mrs. Parker:

"You come down stairs with me, and I'll give you

something to eat. Your husband can go down with the men."

Jim was very hungry then, and he said to himself:

"I might as well go down there and get what's coming rather than nothing at all."

So he got in the line down stairs and received a cup of coffee and a hunk of dry bread. Jim ate in a disgusted manner, for he never did care for dry bread.

"Well, this is what you get from these Christian charity bums," he said to himself — ungrateful beast that he was. While he was crunching his bread and musing to himself, a kindly hand was laid on his shoulders and a kindly voice spoke up:

"You're in trouble, ain't you, pal?"

"What in h—— is it to you?" snarled Jim. "I ain't asked you for nothing. And that's probably what I'd get if I did."

The stranger seemed undisturbed by Jim's gruff reply.

"That little woman there is your wife?" he inquired, pointing to Hattie as she was eating her bread and coffee across the rail in the back of the room.

"You'd better believe so!" growled Jim again. "And you'd better not call her anything else if you know where you're well off."

"I thought so," replied the stranger. "You'd better get off your high horse! You're too independent. Where are you going to put this little wife up tonight, do you know?"

"No!" thundered Jim. "But I'll find a place for

her if I have to commit a robbery, and I ain't got to that point yet."

"I'm Mr. Baker," replied the stranger, introducing himself, "Secretary of this mission. I am going to give you a dollar. If you do not wish to take it as a gift, you can return it when you get work. There is a hotel for women over by the Salvation Army just above here. Your wife can stay there for twenty cents. You can get lodgings for about the same amount near there. The rest of the dollar will get you and her something to eat in the morning."

Jim accepted the dollar on condition that he would pay it back when he got work. He then took his wife to the so-called Hotel, where all the hags, rags, scuffs, and broken down women of the Bowery put up — where the filth and scum of the earth had their quarters. Jim felt ashamed as he left his little clean wife there with the rest — but he could do nothing else. He found lodgings for himself in a lodging house for men, which was as filthy as the Hotel for women. The next morning he met his wife and they dined on the remaining money. Jim called at the mission, where Mr. Baker gave him five cents and sent him to Brooklyn for work. There Jim washed down three flights of marble stairs, a peculiar job for a steeple jack. His broken elbow pained him all the time, but he persevered, and finally his day's work was over. The janitor paid him \$1.25, which didn't please Jim a bit. He had many times earned fifty dollars in fifty minutes.

Jim returned to the Bowery and divided the money with his wife. They both paid for their rooms for the following night, and then bought something to eat. That evening they attended the meeting at the mission, and afterwards got their rations of dry bread and coffee.

The following day Jim looked for work, but couldn't find any. Again he and his faithful wife attended the meeting at the mission. There a man of the Brotherhood gave him fifty cents. Again they ate of the mission fare, and with forty of the fifty cents paid for their night's lodgings. The other ten cents Jim gave to his wife for food. The following morning Jim was walking down Delaney Street, when he saw the rope out of the flag pole of a bank. He went in and told the authorities that he'd fix it for a dollar. He did.

The next day, after the mission program of the night before, Jim happened to think of the smokestack on the Mount Vernon laundry that he had promised to paint. With the money left from the dollar he had earned the previous day, he and his wife both went by trolley to Mount Vernon. Jim walked into the main office of the laundry and told the man he was there to do the job he had promised to do, provided he would help him.

"I might as well tell you," began Jim. "I'm going to lay my cards on the table. I'm the biggest, rottenest rummy that ever lived. Up until a little over a week ago I hardly knew a sober day for thirteen years. That little woman across the street is my wife. And

I've got a boy, seventeen years old. That boy is over in Newark, New Jersey, with some people that have been kind enough to take care of him. My wife had to leave me a little over three months ago, in Newark, New Jersey, when I sold the furniture for two dollars and fifty cents, and left her homeless. Now this last week I've had to put her up in that madhouse on the Bowery, where all the broken down hags put up. I've been trying to get her a decent room, but I can't seem to do it. So I thought of your job this morning and spent the last cent I had to get out here. Now you must know somebody that's got a rope. Borrow me a rope and buy the paint and brush, and take it out of the job. You need the job done, and I need the money."

"Yes," replied the manager, after listening to Jim's story. "I guess we can fix it up all right. We'll get that woman out of there — that's no place for her."

So he borrowed a rope next door. It reached half way down the stack. Jim had the engineer make him an "S" hook, which Jim fastened to the top rim of the stack. The laundry furnished two men, who hoisted Jim up to the top. He was furnished with a white-wash broom, and was able to paint around the whole stack without shifting his position. He painted it down as far as the roof. Then, with a long pole he took the rigging off of the stack. It was a perilous job, but Jim finished it and then went to the office. Mr. Taylor, for it was Taylor's Laundry above which Jim had been working, spoke to Jim, saying:

"Boy! A man who's got the nerve you have, and is willing to work, deserves full pay!"

He gave Jim the ten dollars, which looked big to Jim. That night he and his wife went back to New York City, and rented furnished rooms on East Hous-ten Street, where Hattie could cook and do light house-keeping. Through his work at Taylor's Laundry in Mount Vernon, Jim got employment with the West-chester Light and Power Company, which owned about all the gas works up and down the Hudson, and at each plant they had from one to six smokestacks to be painted.

Jim had stopped drinking alcoholics on October 26, 1919. His boy Carleton came to live with him. Every evening he and his wife attended the meetings at the Bowery Mission, where he won favor in the eyes of Mr. Hallmond, the superintendent, and the others as well. He spoke many times, joined their Brotherhood, but was not converted; for Brotherhood cards were substituted for direct conversion at the mission. The men sang together, read the Bible, prayed, and talked over their troubles with each other. Jim took part as much as he could, and put up a great battle with the temptations which beset him.

The year 1920 came, and on January 16 of that famous year National Prohibition went into effect. That helped Jim in his great fight, for there was not the open bar and the open drinking that there used to be. But night after night he walked the floor, drink-

ing sweet cider, bromo-seltzers, soda, seltzer water, near beer, and even vinegar to quench a terrible thirst. No man, except one who had been a drunkard, could understand the cravings and longings of every nerve in the body of a former drunk trying to go straight. Jim battled with all his own strength, with all his own will — and if there ever was a man with a will stronger than that of Steeple Jim Parker's, the biographers have failed to record his life story.

Along in the spring of 1920, two leaders of the Brotherhood, who had come through in fine shape, and had professed Christ (which Jim had not done), asked if they might board at the Parker home. Jim and his wife thought it would be fine to have two professing Christians in their home; and so Ernie and Frank, for those were their first names, were taken in. Instead of paying board, they used to bring home food and supplies. Jim was making hundreds of dollars at the time, and refused any definite board money. Sometimes Frank and Ernie would give a dollar or more to Mrs. Parker. Then another addition was made to the family. Conrad, a German lad, was taken into the household. Everything went smoothly for four or five weeks. Jim had, with his own strength of will, been sober for about seven months. And there was rejoicing among his and her relatives when it was learned that Jim had finally been led to the Christian way of life.

But one night, one of Jim's boarders came home

drunk. Jim told him he didn't think it was good at all. He then asked him if he was going to lead the meeting the following night at the Bowery Mission, as had been scheduled. Yes, the boarder said he was. Jim was stunned, for that man was a professing Christian, and he was not. And without a word of prayer, without a confession, that bold-faced hypocrite dared to lead the mission meeting the following evening.

Then another blow came to Jim about two days later, when another of his Christian boarders came home with a pair of expensive shoes for him.

"What size shoe do you wear, Jim?" he inquired.

"Six and one half," replied Jim.

"I thought so," said the boarder. "That's the size I got for you."

He opened a box and withdrew a fine pair. "Don't you think you paid too much for those?" said Jim, pleased with the gift.

"Never mind that. They didn't cost me anything. We had a fire the other day down to the shop. The insurance company will pay for these. They'll never miss one pair."

Jim said nothing out loud, but within he said:

"One is a thief, and the other a drunk and a hypocrite."

The next morning Jim went over to Sixth Avenue, about as far as 20th Street, to see a man about painting the *Old America*. That was the mast of the ship *Old America*, owned by the Lipton Tea Com-

pany, which had been the first to defeat the fleet of *Shamrocks*. The mast was later placed at the big Armory on the corner of King's Bridge Road and Jerome Avenue.

While waiting for his man, it began to rain. Jim stepped into a barroom to wait. Now the former alcoholic barrooms sold near beer, soda, and other soft drinks; but some smuggled the "real stuff" to patrons. Jim went up to the bar and ordered a Ginger Ale. There was only one customer in the store at the time. He was smelling a whiskey glass.

"That's pretty good stuff," he said.

"Yes," replied the bartender. "We have a way of getting it. We don't sell moonshine here."

Then Jim turned around to the bartender and said:

"It's pretty hard to get whiskey, now, that isn't blended with moonshine."

The bartender took a whiskey glass and poured a little whiskey from the bottle into the glass. He passed it to Jim, saying,

"Try that, if you're any judge of whiskey, and see if there's any moonshine in that."

Jim took the glass, and, thinking of the two men from the mission who were living at his house — one a thief, the other a hypocrite — he swallowed the taste. A great craving was awakened within him. Without hesitating he ordered a "long neck" and paid about seven dollars for it. He drank it eagerly, and called for more. Although he had almost a hundred dollars in his pocket when he entered the bar, it was gone when he went out.

The same day he saw the man about the flag pole *Old America*, and was awarded the job of painting it. That night he came home drunk as he had ever been. The seven months of heaven for Mrs. Parker and Carleton had come to a close. No more did they visit the Bowery Mission.

CHAPTER X

BACK TO THE DRUNKS

That night, when Jim came home, Conrad and Frank decided to leave, for Jim was ugly and hard to speak to. It was not long before Mrs. Parker and Carleton left for Providence. They used money that Ernie had given them for carfares, and stayed with relatives. Jim and Ernie were left to keep house alone. Now Ernie had saved about two hundred dollars in the bank. That he withdrew, and together, Jim and Ernie spent it for strong drink.

Finally Jim went to work. After he had made quite a sum of money, he sent some to his wife and told her to come with the boy to New York City again — that he had sobered. After a few weeks, Mrs. Parker consented to have Jim sell their furniture for \$8.50. She advised Jim to go South, where, among new acquaintances, it would be easier to sober.

But he got as far as Philadelphia, where he hired a room on the corner of Vine and West Twelfth Streets. It was a bootlegger's apartment, and Jim kept drinking heavily while he was there. Carleton's presence there, however, kept him at work. Together they repaired the tops of big factory chimneys, painted many flag poles and smokestacks, and could have secured a

great deal more work, had Jim kept sober. One day Carleton came to his father and asked for fifteen dollars. Jim went to one of the firms for whom he was working, and drew twenty-five dollars, giving fifteen to Carleton. Carleton then left his father, and took his mother to Providence, where they lived at 144 Globe Street. Carleton went to work for himself, and managed to support himself and his mother.

Jim went to Richmond, Virginia, where he could find neither work nor alcohol. He then went to St. Petersburg, and, in a sober condition, got a job to fix up a smoke stack on a tobacco factory there.

While there, a demure girl came over to him and inquired:

"Is your name Parker?"

"That's what my mother said," replied Jim.

"Well," replied the girl, "my name is Parker too. If, sir, while you're in town you'd like a little drink, you can come up to my house and I'll see that you get it."

That little bit of information made Jim happy, for he hadn't been able to find any alcoholics in the city, although he had searched. Jim went to visit her that very night. A crowd of colored men and women was there. Jim bought a pint of so-called "White Mule," which was really nothing but moonshine. He treated the crowd, and then bought another pint, which he put in his hip pocket. Then two of the men commenced fighting. Jim realized that perhaps they were trying to get him involved, and then to rob him of his roll of bills. He had been through such experiences before,

and knew when a fight was put up and when not. Jim thought he'd leave. This purpose was carried out quicker than he planned, for just then three officers of the law came crashing through the door. Jim got out of the house by a back way, and crawled over a fence. In so doing, the bottle in the back of his pocket fell to the ground. Just as Jim reached the sidewalk, a cop grabbed him.

"What were you doing in there?" demanded the officer. "You better come along with me!"

"I guess not," said Jim.

Then Jim hit the officer on the mouth. He tore himself away and ran. The officer blew his whistle, and it was not long before two others, making three in all, were pursuing Jim. He fought with them, and it was not until they had beat him down with their clubs that "The Fighting Brute" was subdued. Jim was put in jail.

The next morning, before the judge, the officers testified that Jim was the worst man to arrest they had ever met. But Jim had heard that before, for everywhere he went, the police always testified that he was as hard a man to subdue as they had ever seen. The negroes were also in court.

The judge was a fine old southerner, with a white beard and a mustache. He talked with the officers and finally said to Jim:

"Have you got anything to say, sah?"

"Yes sir, I have," spoke Jim in a loud voice. "In the first place, your honor, I ain't a drinking man.

But I've heard so much about your 'White Mule' down here that I thought I would try a drink or two of it. I think they have misrepresented it up North where I come from. It has just twice the kick they told me it had. I remember taking two drinks, and that is all I remember. But perhaps on account of my having a broken back, that might have something to do with it."

The court room was filled at the time, with both newspaper reporters and spectators. When Jim mentioned his broken back, listeners leaned forward, and the old judge's eyes grew large and eager.

"What did you say, sah, a broken back?" interrupted the judge.

"Yes, your honor," replied Jim, pleased with the effects of his little speech. "Unfortunately I have that injury. Do you want to feel it?"

For a moment the astonished judge stroked his whiskers. "No sah," he said, "we'll let George do it!" He then turned around to the clerk and said, "George, you go feel that man's back."

Everybody in the court room roared with laughter, and the newspaper men wrote as fast as they could. George left his box seat and went over to where Jim was standing. Steeple Jim unbuttoned his vest and shirt, and showed George the wide elastic belt which he had been compelled to wear since his accident many years before. Jim stooped over, while George's hand rubbed his backbone in order to locate any irregularity. The old judge leaned forward in his chair. The spectators awaited in suspense. In a moment George spoke:

"Well, your honor, there is something the matter with this man's back!"

"All right," said the judge, "you can sit down.

And then turning around and facing the jury he said, "Gentlemen, this is the most peculiar excuse that I have ever heard for a drunk in all my forty-one years' experience on the bench. I believe it deserves consideration. Therefore," turning to Jim, "I am going to give you an honourable discharge with the benefit of the doubt. But hereafter, while you are a visitor here, I would advise you to steer clear of all mules, whether they be black or white, especially the kind that comes in bottles!"

There was applause and laughter. On the way out of the court room a reporter got hold of Jim, who was not completely sober. Jim told the reporter many things that he would not have told had he been sober. That afternoon, a newspaper came out with one column and a half of its front page devoted to the trial of Steeple Jim Parker. There were also cartoons, showing George examining Jim's back, and the old judge leaning forward in his bench and stroking his whiskers. Jim read the article and felt ashamed of himself. People recognized him on the street, and laughed out loud at him. That made Jim feel even more ashamed. He resolved to leave town, but before doing so he went around to the home where he bought the "White Mule," and found in the yard the pint bottle that had fallen out of his pocket. It was not broken.

Jim then went to Norfolk, Virginia, where he couldn't find any work. He put up at a Union Mission there. He met an iron worker from Providence, who was working at a school house in Norfolk. This friend hired Jim a room and paid the rent. Jim managed to obtain a little work finally, and saved up \$4.50, which he put on the inside pocket of his vest. He met a traveling salesman from New York City one afternoon, who asked him if he wanted a drink. Jim replied in the affirmative. He hadn't had a drink all morning, and therefore was willing to accept any kind of a drink offered him. He took the little bottle from the stranger. It looked like "White Mule," but the salesman said it was good corn whiskey. Jim took a couple of good drinks and then staggered out to the street. An officer saw him whirl around in circles, and then fall down in a heap. The policeman immediately arrested him, and rushed him to the station house, where a doctor was called. He had to use a stomach pump to save Jim from poisoning.

The next morning Jim was fined \$4 by the judge, who must have known how much money Jim had. After the court had adjourned, Jim asked the officer where he had been arrested. The policeman told him the exact location, and Jim went back and found the other fellow in a back alley lying unconscious. He gave him a kick and woke him up. The unfortunate man hadn't remembered a thing that had happened. Jim took him to a nearby drug store, where he had the druggist make him up a drink which took the place

of a doctor's stomach pump. That salesman said he was done with corn whiskey and the South — that he was going to New York as soon as he could.

Three nights later, Jim, and Louis the iron worker, both took the boat to Washington, D. C. The next day they started to hike from Washington to Baltimore. A naval officer came along in an automobile and gave them a ride. When they reached Baltimore, it was night. Somebody told them of the "Inasmuch Mission," where they could be put up over night. They found the mission. It could accommodate about fifty men. There were stall-like niches in the mission, into which the men crawled and slept. One fat man, the next morning, couldn't get himself out until some others pulled him out. Everyone laughed.

They were working their way to Philadelphia, and a big truck gave them a lift. All went well until they came to a toll bridge at Havre de Grace, where the fee was five cents per passenger. The truck driver had but five cents to pay his own fare, so that the two others had to get out.

Jim had his tools with him, and was cursing everybody and everything, when he happened to see a crowd of people gathered around a building at Havre de Grace. He walked up to see what the excitement was about. The building was the Town Hall; there had been a fire in the top story a year before, which had ruined the offices there. But the night before, one of the walls had fallen in, and the people were afraid that

other parts might come down, damaging the other good stories. Many of the town officials were there, and they were wondering what could be done and who they could get to remedy the situation. Jim came up to them and asked:

“What’s the matter?”

“One of the walls has caved in,” spoke up a man. “We’re afraid of the others. We’re wondering who we can get to take them down.” He went on to explain that although the third story had been rendered useless by the fire, the town wished to make a good two story building out of the remains.

Jim said, “Will you give \$200 to have those walls taken down to save the other stories?”

“Of course we will,” spoke up a big man.

Jim passed the man one of his professional cards, and said:

“I’ll take those down for \$200, but I want to be darn sure the town’s worth the money.”

Jim had been speaking with the mayor of Havre de Grace, although he didn’t know it at the time. The mayor said to Jim:

“Wait a minute, and I’ll call a meeting and see what we can do.” It took Jim a long time to believe that he had been speaking with a man of authority. The mayor held a council meeting on the lawn in front of the hall, and they awarded Jim the job for \$200. Then Jim turned around to the mayor and asked:

“What kind of a jail have you got here? Is it clean?”

"Yes. What do you want to know for?" inquired the Mayor.

"Well, guess we'll have to sleep there until the job's done," replied Jim. "We haven't any money."

The mayor turned around to one of the men and said:

"I guess this man will get the job done all right. He's got nerve enough." And then to Jim and his companion. "I guess you won't have to sleep in jail. We'll get you a nice boarding place."

Jim did do that job. He had his Thanksgiving dinner in Havre de Grace, and a week after, he had finished the work and gone to Boston. There he sent for his wife and boy, who came to live with him again.

Jim kept on drinking, but not quite as heavily as he had done in years gone by. For he found real genuine alcoholic beverages extremely hard to get and very high in price.

Jim went to the Morgan Memorial, where he painted the cross on the building. He also cleaned the "angels" that held the lights on the inside of the Church of All Nations. At the Memorial he met Mr. A. G. Wesley, who had given \$5000 for a fresh air farm in memory of his wife. There in the summer, Mr. Wesley, who had founded the Wesley House at Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts, gave all his time to little children, making them happy, and telling them of Christ. Jim was impressed by that kind old gentleman, who left sunshine wherever he went.

Jim also painted flag poles for many Boston firms. Carleton helped him with his work, and soon became an efficient steeple jack.

In February 1922, Steeple Jim was operated on in the Massachusetts General Hospital for a double rupture. After twenty-one days he was released. Then he and his family moved to Haverhill, where he repaired the steeple on St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, for which he received \$250. He also painted many flag poles in Haverhill and vicinity. At Southbridge, he repaired the steeple on the Notre Dame Roman Catholic Church, where the lightning had ripped off tiles. Jim put two hundred and sixty five-pound tiles on that steeple, and received \$300 for the job. He also painted the clock and repaired the spire of the Baptist Church there, and earned about \$250 for that job. Jim went hither and thither.

While in Haverhill, he grew prosperous and bought a 1916 Ford Sedan. He never learned to run the car, for he felt convinced that sometime he would get into an accident, drunkard that he was, if he did so. It was odd that a man who could go up a spire when he was drunk, and work there all day, never learned to swim or drive an automobile.

It was in 1922, during his stay in Haverhill, that Jim's brother Bill, who had learned to swim, and who had taught Jim how to steeple jack, was drowned at sea by the upsetting of his fishing dory.

In Haverhill, as everywhere Jim had gone, the

newspapers always gave him good write-ups and frequently put his picture in their columns. Jim and his family moved from Haverhill to New York City, where he did a great deal of work. But wherever he went in his Ford, he always had to have somebody drive for him. He did much work at Mount Vernon — on flag poles, smokestacks, and chimneys.

From New York City they moved to Syracuse, where Jim was doing fine until he got the job of painting the big sign on the Crown Brewery, where they brewed beer at six per cent, and then diluted it down to one half of one per cent. But Jim partook of the undiluted portion, and got disgustingly drunk.

Returning to the metropolitan area, Jim applied for the job of painting a flag pole for a certain doctor in Jersey City. He had painted it several times before then, so that the doctor knew him and his good work.

"How long will it take you to do the job?" inquired the physician.

"About fifteen or twenty minutes," replied Jim.

"All right. If you get a hustle on, you can do the job."

Jim had been drinking quite heavily. But he was not too intoxicated to climb the pole, and paint the top part without ado. He had been working but a few moments, however, when he fell asleep, clinging to the pole. His head bowed and he slept. Below Carleton waited patiently, not daring to wake him for fear that in so doing his father would wake with a start

and then fall. A curious crowd soon gathered about the pole. The doctor arrived on the scene, and all waited breathlessly to see what would be the outcome of a curious situation. Fully an hour passed in suspense. Then Jim woke up, and, without noticing the crowd below, hastily painted the pole — which took him but a few minutes. When he had finished, he gallantly walked over to the doctor and said, "I done that pretty quick, didn't I?"

"What are you trying to do, kid me?" blurted the doctor. "I thought you were a little drunk but not as drunk as all that. Next time you come to paint the pole, come sober!"

The crowd dispersed, wondering how such a man had been spared his life. Jim was paid five dollars. He never returned to paint that pole again.

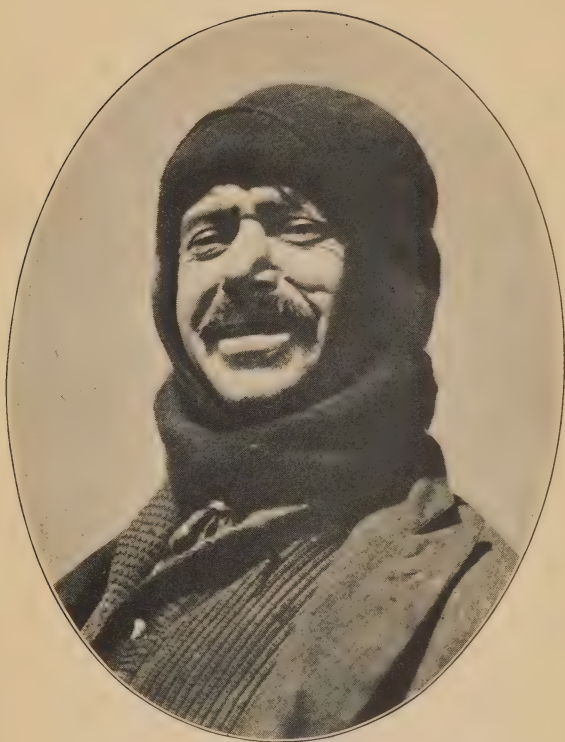
In February of 1923, Jim went to Rochester, New York. Clarence, the boy who had been his chauffeur ever since the Parkers left Haverhill, drove all the way. There Jim worked on the German Lutheran Church, and also repaired the big 225-foot steeple on the Spiritualist Church at the corner of Plymouth Avenue South and Troup Streets. That spire, then seventy years old, was one of the highest in the country. The Rochester *Times-Union* sent one of its photographers to get a picture of Jim about to go to work, then a picture of him on the Steeple, then in his Ford with his wife. He received good write-ups in the other papers, which quoted his opinions from time to time on dare devil stunts, human flies, and similar

matters. While in Rochester he was arrested for drunkenness one midnight in a bootlegger's joint. It took three policemen to beat Jim down and get him into the patrol wagon.

After he had finished up his work in Rochester, he sold his Ford and bought a second hand Dodge, in which the Parkers went back to Syracuse. In Baldwinsville he repaired the spires on the Congregational, Baptist, and Presbyterian Churches. Also he fixed the steeple on a little Baptist church in Lafayette.

Jim got word from his sister Gertrude, whom he hadn't seen for fourteen years, to come and visit her in Boston, where she had recently married a man by the name of Russell. It had been Gertrude's birthday party that Jim had broken up when he came home to Whitman, way back in 1899. So Clarence drove them the entire distance to Boston.

In the early part of 1923 the Parkers arrived in Boston to visit Mr. and Mrs. Russell on Tremont Street. All went well for three days, and then the third night Jim came home drunk, but instead of knocking at his sister's door he pounded on the door of an Italian. The Italian didn't like being waked so early in the morning, and he told Jim so. Jim objected to what that Italian told him, so he caught him by the neck, struck him in the eye, and threw him down stairs. Jim followed him down that flight, and threw him down the next one. The Italian finally ran to the police station, and showed a black eye, a cut



STEEPLE JIM *The Fighting Brute*

nose, and a badly-damaged body to the policeman. Gertie's rooms happened to be opposite those of the Italian. Three policemen came to arrest Jim, and after sister Gertrude's new furniture had been smashed up in the brawl that followed, Jim escaped down the back stairs, leaving stairs and parlor set all topsy-turvy. He hastened to the garage where his Dodge was parked, bargained with the garageman, and finally sold his machine for \$40. He gave \$20 to his son Carleton, that he and his mother might go to Providence. With the remainder, Jim went to New York City, where he went to work. He also went to drinking.

CHAPTER XI

CONVICTION, CONVERSION AND CONFESSION

On the 26th day of July, 1923, Jim painted the flag poles on top of the Colgate clock. The old timepiece which Jim had painted seven times had been replaced by a new one, fifty feet in diameter. That had an enamel finish, and was, therefore, washed instead of painted; but Jim painted the poles above it every year. He had become so friendly with the company that they had his picture, working on the old clock, in their catalogue, which they sent to customers.

In the evening of July 26th, Jim went over to Tom O'Brien's barroom, where some of his pals probably told him they had some "real stuff." For at three o'clock the next morning, a policeman saw Jim crawling off the roof of a two-story building near the Colgate establishment, where his "friends" had dragged him the night before. Those men, wanting Jim's money, had lured him by liquor, blackened both his eyes, broken his nose, and bruised him all over, leaving him half dead, with his clothes torn and soaked in blood.

That day, the 27th of July, Jim staggered from barroom to barroom, where the keepers recognized him and gave him strong drink; for Jim had no money,

and had to be trusted. Somehow, though, that day Jim couldn't seem to drown his troubles, and he couldn't seem to get drunk. At four o'clock in the afternoon he wandered back to Tom O'Brien's, and was about to go into the bar when something stopped him.

Then and there his whole past flashed before his eyes. He seemed to go back in a moment to his boyhood days, when his mother first taught him how to read the Bible and how to pray. Then, one by one, all the brutal and degrading things he had ever done flocked before his eyes. Jim suffered more then than he had ever suffered before. His spirit dwelt in torments of agony, and for the first time in his life he was confronted with a problem that he couldn't fight with his fists. For the first time in his life Jim owned up that drink had him beaten. His inner conscience convicted him and he said to himself:

"Jim Parker, you're rotten! You might as well end it all by killing yourself!"

He made up his mind. He thought of Brooklyn Bridge, where others had thrown themselves to death below. He resolved to go there and seek death. He went to the ferry and reached New York City. Then he changed his mind. He thought of some of the big buildings he had worked on. All he would have to do would be to fling himself to death from the heights of one of them.

Indecisively Jim walked up and down the Bowery, feeling more miserable than he had ever felt before,

and suffering more mentally than he had ever suffered before. Every sin that he had ever committed loomed up in all its hideousness to torment his mind. Up and down the Bowery, said to be the street of sunshine and shadow, a street of forgotten men, Jim reeled along, as did scores like him.

Then, about ten o'clock, down by Chatham Square, Jim saw a sight-seeing bus draw up. A group of well dressed people got out of it and went into Doyers Street. They were a group of well-to-do folk, who had come from more fortunate quarters to visit Chinatown, where the Chinese were respectable, but the white men were booze hounds, dope fiends, panhandlers, and highway robbers. Jim thought of the time when he, too, as a sight-seer, had gone with a crowd back in 1919, when he had been sober, down to The Rescue Society midnight meeting on 5-7 Doyers Street. Those sight-seers that Jim watched, headed for the mission, where on the platform, they could sit and view the audience of a few hundred down-and-out-men, some of whom had been in various professions, in business, or just men of leisure, with fortunes to spend. The Superintendent, Thomas Noonan, did not dare to put the clean spectators among the common men of the Bowery, many of whom were alive with lice and vermin.

Jim, as he remembered a former visit to The Rescue Society, decided to go to that mission, and hide in among the down-and-outs, where he might better choose the easiest way he could kill himself. Jim

tottered to the mission. The hall had formerly been a Chinese Theatre, and beneath it in the basement there was formerly an opium den. Jim went in, and seated himself in the middle of the hall among the dope fiends, drug addicts, jail birds, and drunkards. Across the aisle from Jim sat a former janitor, Ned Galligan, who, in years past, had earned annually over two thousand dollars. He had been born in Calais, Maine. He had been led astray by alcohol. Jim looked at him with interest.

The mission itself, although full of filthy men, was clean. The benches and floors looked as though they had been frequently scrubbed. Jim gazed at the English words above the old Chinese paintings. He read, "Jesus is the Friend you Need," "Behold, I Have Played the Fool," "Prayer Changes Things," and "How Long Since You Wrote to Mother?" He saw the platform with its several rows of chairs, filled with well dressed spectators. He saw the pulpit, a piano nearby, and the box stove that furnished the heat.

The meeting began. The men sang fervently — hymns of Jesus, the Saviour. For, in the crowd were some who had mended their ways, but who had not found work. Those converts were distributed throughout the hall and on the platform, where they sang with all their strength. Then came the scripture, prayer, and special music. "Bill" Meyrick, formerly an opera star, then a drunken mute, and finally a soldier of Jesus Christ, sang a solo. People loved him, and he was known as "The Nightingale of

Chinatown." Afterwards there was a period when anybody might speak. Jim particularly noticed a man who dared to get up before the congregation and tell what God had done for him. He had lived a hard, drunken life, but had been saved, thanks to Jesus Christ. His speech again brought thoughts of Nova Scotia to the mind of Steeple Jim, who remembered how, as a boy, his mother used to gather the children kneeling around her, and had them say their prayers before they went to bed. He did not hear much of what was said the rest of the evening, for Jim was thinking that perhaps God would give him another chance; if He had done so much for those others that had glorified the grace of Jesus, could He not do as much for Jim Parker?

The invitation came, when Thomas J. Noonan, ambassador of Jesus Christ, and commonly called by those who knew and loved him, "The Bishop of Chinatown," urged the men present to give themselves up to the Lord Jesus Christ. He pleaded with them to come into the fold of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who died for their sins and the sins of the whole world. He invited those who would take an out and out stand for the Saviour, to come to the front of the room and kneel by the front bench of the room reserved as an altar. As he invited the men, the crowd of listeners grew uneasy.

There was a fight going on within Jim Parker. Would he or would he not go forward? He beckoned to old Ned across the aisle. Ned scarcely dared to

look at his cut face, his black eyes, his swollen jaws with many teeth missing, his blood-soaked clothes, his worn shoes. Jim looked as bad to old Ned as any man could look, and yet live. Jim beckoned a second time, and then Ned came across the aisle to see what this awful caricature had to say.

"What do you think I better do, go up front?" Jim asked Ned. He then told of his intended suicide, and mumbled other things.

The hall and platform were packed. It was a hot night. The invitation was given by Mr. Noonan and a fervent convert by the name of "Whitey" tried to win the lost sheep. Five men came forward. Two of these were Finns, and could not understand a word of English. The third man said he was hungry, and wanted something to eat. The fourth demanded a "flop," which was a place to sleep. The fifth was crying like a baby. He told Thomas Noonan that he wanted to be saved; and there upon his knees he prayed to God, asking Him to save him through Christ, asking Him to make him a clean father, and a clean husband — to take out of his life whatever had ruined him.

That man was formerly known as "The Fighting Brute." That night, on the 27th of July, 1923, "The Fighting Brute" died, and by the Spirit there was born to the world a babe of Jesus Christ, James Parker, Evangelist and Steeple Jack. Gone were his drunkard days! Gone were his wicked deeds!

Yet that could not have happened had it not been

that some ambassador of Jesus Christ had invited "The Fighting Brute" to be born of Christ. Woe unto Thomas Noonan or any other preacher, who does not invite men and women to accept Christ!

On the evening of July 27th, 1923, there was joy in the presence of the angels of God, for Jim Parker, the sinner, had repented.* After the meeting, Jim went down stairs to lie on the floor, with many other drunkards — to sleep. But there was no room for Jim, until Ned Galligan, the friend he had talked with up stairs, divided his own space and newspaper for Jim to lie down on. The floor was hard and bare — but drunkards never noticed those hardships. Ned made Jim take off his shoes and coat, out of which Jim made a pillow to rest his head on — otherwise his few possessions might have been stolen.

At six o'clock the next morning the men were turned out to loaf around the parks and streets for the day. Jim found fifty-five cents in his pocket, which he divided with Ned. They bought food. When night came, they both attended the meeting at the Bowery Mission, where they got food after the meeting was over. From thence they went to The Rescue Society, attended the meeting there, and then again slept in the basement, which had formerly been an opium den. On July 29th it rained. Jim and Ned walked the streets like two beaten dogs, loafing in hallways until noon. Then Ned conceived an idea.

* See Luke 15:10.

"Come on. I know where we can get a plate of soup," he said. They started down Cherry Street to a Roman Catholic Sisters' institution. They lost their way, but when they finally reached their destination, it was too late.

"It's all been given out," said the man. Hungry and disappointed, they started back for the Bowery, and when they reached it, walked to Battery Park. There they rested near South Street, by the Sailors' Institute. At night they went to the Bowery Mission, and had their first bite to eat for twenty-four hours. Again they went to The Rescue Society, and that night at the meeting, Jim gave a short testimony for Christ. Again they slept on the floor below.

By that time Jim's brain was beginning to clear up. He asked himself why he, a steeple jack, with great earning powers, was in such a poor condition.

The third day, a man by the name of Al Shea told Jim that Brigadier Wallace Winchell of the Salvation Army wanted the Army's sign painted. Jim hastened to the Salvation Army Memorial Hotel, 223½-225 Bowery, and asked about work. The Captain said that there was none, but just then Brigadier Winchell stepped out of his office and invited Jim into his private room. There Jim told of his past life, which had terminated in his conversion a few nights before. Come to find out, Brigadier Winchell and his wife had helped out Mrs. Parker in her distress many times in Jersey City, where the Winchells had formerly been working. The Brigadier had also heard of Steeple

Jim, because of his record of being the only man who ever painted the Colgate clock. Jim then asked if he could paint the flag pole on the Hotel. Then in walked the indignant Captain:

"We don't need anybody to paint that flag pole, and besides, if we did, we've got a half dozen fellows out in the lobby who'll do it for almost nothing," he said.

Jim turned to the Brigadier and said:

"I'll do it for three dollars, and if you've got anybody in the lobby that can do it at all, I'll do it for nothing."

The same Captain opened the door and shouted down the corridor:

"Hey, boys! Who wants to paint the flag pole up there?"

"Where is it?" one man inquired.

"Up on the front of the building," replied the Captain.

"Not me!" gave in the inquirer.

Then the Brigadier turned to Jim and said, "You do the job when the weather gets fit."

Something for Jim to look forward to! That night Jim and Ned attended the meeting and the "feed" at the Bowery Mission. A man named Williams gave Ned a ticket for a bed; but Jim was not fortunate enough to get one, so he slept at the Doyers Street Mission.

Jim went down to The Rescue Society that night. At the meeting the man who sat beside him kept looking at him, and finally said:

"Aren't you Steeple Jim, the man that paints the Colgate clock?"

"Yes, what's left of him," replied Jim humbly.

"Do you ever remember giving me half a dollar in the Bowery Mission back in 1919?"

"No, I don't," admitted Jim.

"Where are you going to stay tonight?"

Jim pointed below and said, "Down there."

"No you aren't," replied the friend. "I made ninety cents washing dishes today. You haven't eaten, have you?"

Jim said he'd had a cup of coffee and a piece of bread in the Bowery Mission.

"Here's seventy cents," said the stranger, passing Jim some money. "Go get yourself something to eat. You can get a room over in the new Windsor Hotel."

Jim finally accepted the money, and went to buy something to eat, ending at the Windsor Hotel, where he got a room for the night. On a shelf in the locker of the room he saw a man's cap and a bottle of moonshine about two-thirds full. Those were terrible moments for Jim, as he stood eying the bottle. Here was his first temptation since his conversion. Formerly, all the will power he possessed could not have kept him from the bottle. Back in 1920 in the bar-room, one smell of whiskey had sent him back to strong drink, after seven months of heavenly soberness. Now, realizing his own weakness, Jim fell on his knees by the bed, and called on the strength of God.

He prayed, "Oh God, I know that I haven't wanted

a drink since I got on my knees the other night. But You know and I know that every time I've had a smell of it I've always wanted it. I've got to know. I'm going to get up and take the cork out of that bottle, and if I want to drink it, I'm going to, and go straight to h —— . It's up to You!"

Jim got up, went over to the closet, took the cork out of the bottle, poked his nose close to the nozzle, and took a good whiff. It was the most nauseating smell he had ever experienced. The old enticement had gone, for what Jim Parker, with all his strength and will power had tried to do years before and had failed, God in His power had done for Jim — because Jim had called for His help, and God had heard Jim's call. Jim did not forget to thank God for that victory. Immediately he fell on his knees in supplication, and spoke out loud as before, saying:

"I thank You, God, for what You've done for me. Show me what You want me to do and I'll do it." He settled down to a peaceful night.

The next day it rained, and the flag pole on the Salvation Army Hotel could not be painted. At night Jim and Ned again attended the meeting at the Bowery Mission, and again they ate bread and coffee after the services. They went to The Rescue Society's meeting, and afterward to the basement below to sleep. It was the fourth night since Jim's conversion, and the third night he slept on the basement floor of The Rescue Society. As he lay there, a voice came to him. Jim heard the voice as clearly as the tinkling of a bell. It said:

“Jim Parker, here’s your work: get out and work for men like these. You’ve been the rottenest, most dissipated drunkard this country has ever known. You’ve been arrested hundreds of times, you have been beaten up by the policemen arresting you, and thrown into more hospitals than any other man. You have lived under the name of Steeple Jim — until you’ve made that name infamous in the eight States where you have worked. Now I’m going to give you back your family, and give you a chance to be a clean man. I want you to start a mission, live under that same name of Steeple Jim, and live it clean — so that no one can say that there has been no change in you. Therefore, it will show the people that no matter how low a person gets, I can save them; for I have saved you.”

God had spoken to Jim. He had answered his prayer of the night before. God had spoken truly, for if there ever had been a worse drunkard in the history of the United States, no one ever heard about him. God never lies. Jim figured that he had been arrested almost five hundred times. God had wrought another miracle, for not through merely feeding, clothing, and caring for unfortunate men’s bodies were sinners made clean, but through the dynamite of the Gospel of Jesus Christ were they transformed. Indeed, there never has been on the earth, nor will there ever be again until He comes, more power for good among men than through the name of the Only Begotten of the Father, Jesus Christ.

The next day it rained. Ned and Jim wandered around the same way they had the day before. At noon they went down Cherry Street to the Roman Catholic Sisters, and were there in time to get soup. At noon time, after Jim had eaten his soup, he noticed two Bible students, down by City Hall Park, doing their best to talk on temperance. Around them stood a few young men, leering and laughing at their efforts. That made Jim angry. He spoke to one of the students, saying:

"Let me get up on that box and tell them something."

"Are you a Christian?" inquired one of the two.

"Guess I am;" replied Jim, "guess I can tell them something on temperance, too."

Jim stood up on the box. He forgot to take off his hat, but one of the evangelists did that for him. His eyes were still baggy and blue. He looked like a drunkard, if any man ever did. Jim, without hesitation, pointed to himself and said:

"Here's the end of thirty years drunkenness, ended four nights ago. If anybody knows anything about drunkenness, I do!"

Then Jim continued, and for the first time he told his life story, from the beginning. There was no more sneering in the audience. People eyed him, and soon a crowd gathered to listen, as, in a loud convincing tone, Jim drove home his points.

"You wise guys," Jim said, pointing to the scoffers, "I've been one of the wise guys — look at me now!

You sneer at God — and sneer at these boys because they're trying to do some good. Maybe they don't know the subject as well as I do."

The crowd of eager listeners grew and grew. A patrol wagon of reserve policemen were summoned to handle the traffic. The streets were filled with Jim's audience. Jim hadn't been to any theological seminary to learn how to write paper sermons, yet he found that God gave him the right words to say.

For a solid hour he held their attention. He urged all to serve God rather than the devil. He urged all to let alcoholics alone, and showed by his own life that alcoholics lead only to poverty, misery, and regret. When the meeting was over, at least fifty men and women stayed to talk with him. Some confessed that they never had heard anything like it before; some asked Jim to pray for them; some well-dressed business men gave him words of praise and encouragement. Jim told them that he was going to start a mission for men such as he had been. That was Jim's first life story. He left without giving the two Bible students his address, and afterwards they tried to find him, but could not.

That night Jim and Ned once more received spiritual and bodily food at the Bowery Mission. Again they attended the meeting at The Rescue Society. When it came time for the testimonies, Jim got up, thanked God for salvation through Christ, and announced, to the astonishment of the audience, that he was going to start a mission. Some men sneered;

some smiled; and a few looked astonished and hardly believed. Jim's eyes were still black, his jaw was still swollen, his face still raw — who would believe him?

The next day the weather permitted him to paint the flag pole. It came to Jim that he had borrowed a dollar on his ropes and equipment in Jersey City. He went over on the ferry, and with one dollar of the three he had earned, bought back his equipment. He then went to Brooklyn, and found another job, painting and repairing a building, which would yield him \$165 when completed. "Bill" Meyrick, "The Nightingale of Chinatown," sent for Jim's wife; she came from Providence as soon as she could, and was a glad woman when she found that finally her husband had been converted.

Jim carried out God's command. On the fifteenth of September, 1923, at 360 Wythe Avenue, Brooklyn, "Steeple Jim's Helping Hand Mission" was opened. That first night about forty men and women of the slums heard Thomas Noonan, Superintendent of The Rescue Society, preach the Gospel. Jim kept his mission open every night, and a crowd of eager men heard the word and ate the manna from Heaven. The singing was fervent, and it was not long before men began to come forward and accept the Saviour.

During that season, Jim, through the agency of his mission, gave away clothing to about two hundred poor people. To pay expenses, he took the job of painting and cement washing the Salvation Army

Memorial Hotel on the Bowery, for which he received \$1100.

Meanwhile, he held open air meetings around the city of New York, and other places. When Thanksgiving time came, Jim gave a supper at The Rescue Society, where he fed about three hundred and fifty men in the same basement in which he had slept for several nights. And the following Christmas he gave a turkey sandwich feed to the men at The Rescue Society.

During the winter he told his life story at the Men's Class of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church; at the Young People's Society of the South Third Street Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn; at the North Baptist Church in Jersey City; and at the Volunteers of America on Fulton Street, Brooklyn; at old St. John's Episcopal Church on John Street, New York City; at the Salvation Army meetings; and at many other churches and missions, which received him with outstretched hands, eager to hear from one who had been redeemed by the Lord Jesus.

At his mission on Wythe Avenue, during the winter months, twenty-nine men and women came forward professing conversion. One of the men later became a Captain in the Volunteers of America. Another young man of the group married a girl of the group, and both, it was said, went to Chicago to attend the Moody Bible Institute. Of those converts, the dearest to Jim was his son, who, one night, came up front and there met his Christ. He testified that he wanted

some of that same power that had so changed his father — he didn't know what it was, and yet he knew it was not the will of his father's strength alone.

It was a transient crowd that came to the mission meetings, and when Jim spoke, he preached but one sermon, which was his life story. After the meetings, he and his faithful wife used to go up and down the Bowery, where they sought old men and boys sleeping in the doorways and alleys. To them Jim and his wife gave tickets to lodging houses where Jim had made arrangements for the men.

At the mission, Ned Galligan, Jim's companion on the night of his conversion, helped him in his work. He also helped Jim, along with Carleton, at steeple jacking. Jim paid most of his expenses out of the money he earned from the labor of his own hands. However, at many of the churches where he spoke, collections were taken for his work, and sometimes wealthy churchmen gave him extra help.

At Salvation Army meetings he was continually called upon to speak. To the Y.M.C.A. in Brooklyn and the Y.M.C.A. on the Bowery, he brought his forceful message. At Seamen's Institute on West Street, he commenced his story before a group of sneering, snarling sailors — but before he had finished, they were listening to him with mouths and eyes wide open. Eleven at once took the pledge after Jim had finished his message, and the authorities told Jim it was the largest number they had ever known to do that at one time.

The New York newspapers gave Jim a great deal of free publicity. His activities made wonderful stories for their columns. In the spring of 1924 the first issue of *The Man Builder* was published by the Salvation Army Men's Social Service Department of New York City. It had four pages, and nearly one whole page was devoted to Jim's life story and pictures of him when he was steeple jacking. Articles were written about him in many Christian magazines, and the story of his life and conversion traveled to the four corners of the earth.

On Easter Sunday, 1924, Mr. and Mrs. James Parker attended the morning services of the South Third Street Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, where Newell Woolsey Wells was the pastor. Jim liked the Presbyterian Church because it clung to the old Gospel, which its ministers preached. Two weeks later, he and his wife joined and made many friends.

On March 31st, 1924, Jim closed his "Helping Hand Mission." It had merely been a starter, to help out men in the winter. In the spring and summer, with cold weather gone and no snow on the ground, the poor were better able to provide for themselves.

During the summer of 1924 Jim went to Poughkeepsie, where, a few years before, he had served a short jail term. There he found plenty of work to do. One of his jobs was to paint the flag pole at the Poughkeepsie High School, 139 feet high, said to have been the highest one-piece flag pole in the country.

Jim asked permission from the Poughkeepsie Police to hold an open air meeting in front of the jail, where he had served time. He told them that he had been converted, and had staged a moral comeback. But they sent him to the mayor. He told the mayor that he had been arrested in Poughkeepsie and sentenced to sober up, but that recently he got sobered up in a different way, and that he wanted the privilege of telling the people what had sobered him up. The mayor gave him a special permit. Jim advertized the meetings in the papers, and had souvenirs printed for some of his friends to sell.

The night came, and in front of the Dutchess County Jail on Market Street near Main, twenty or thirty gathered at the regular Salvation Army meeting. After that was over, Jim rose to hold his meeting. More people gathered, and Jim told the story of his life, from beginning to end. The crowd grew larger and larger. Three extra policemen had to be sent to guide the traffic. Jim hammered away in a loud voice. All who heard and saw him knew that he was sincere, and had a message. Jim finally told the people what had made him a sober man.

"Jail had never done it; judges could never do it; but the blood of Jesus Christ has done it in the Doyer Street Mission, Chinatown, New York!"

Those who heard Jim that evening never forgot the words he said.

Winter came. Jim still continued to be a missionary on the Bowery, putting up men for the night, tell-

ing them the Gospel story, and spreading the Glad Tidings everywhere. Every Sunday afternoon at four o'clock he spoke at the Salvation Army Memorial Hotel on the Bowery; he went again and again to churches and missions. The Duchess Trousers Company sent Jim fifty pairs of trousers, which he distributed to men on the Bowery.

CHAPTER XII

SON CARLETON

Carleton had grown in grace. His father and mother loved him more than ever before, and father and son worked together on many jobs. He was a tall lad — six feet in all — and well behaved. Although in Jim's drunken days Jim had sworn and used vile language around the house, Carleton had never been heard to utter a curse. When his father had been drunk, he had cared for his dear mother as best he could, and called her, "best girl," for there was no other girl friend dearer to his heart.

Everywhere the Parkers had moved, Carleton had purchased souvenirs of the places, postal cards, and the like. Although his education had been limited by his father's roving life, still, he loved to read. He patronized the public libraries, and filled notebooks with interesting facts he thought were well worth saving. By the time he was grown he had filled three large one-hundred-and-sixty-page notebooks.

In the first three there appeared observations like these:

"Birds and bats are the only living vertebrates capable of flight. Squirrels, lizards, snakes, fish, and lemurs fly through the air with great swooping leaps."

"Deserts cover twenty-four percent of the earth's surface."

"February takes its name from the Latin 'Februare' — to expiate or purify — because the Roman festival of purification was held in this month."

"The distance between Paris and Berlin is about 675 miles."

"Persons are said to be 'loquacious' when they are continually talking or chattering."

"Martin Luther died February 18, 1546."

"The Crusades began in 1096."

"Wrinkles usually appear as persons grow older, because the fatty tissue which supports the skin wastes away and sags in folds."

"Rice paper is not made from the rice plant, but from the pith of a tree growing in Formosa."

"The mass of the moon is about one-eighty-first of the earth."

"In the eyes of the law a person is regarded as an 'infant' until he or she becomes of age."

Carleton made friends of boys and girls wherever he went. He was very much interested in his father's mission work, and would often talk with him about going to some other city, and starting a mission there.

"Dad," he would plead. "Go back to Providence — where you fought with them, drank with them, and went to jail with them. By leading as clean a life as you are now, you will show them the better way."

"What's the use?" Jim would usually reply. "If I

go back there, I'll only have to go to jail. Don't you think I paid enough in the month and eleven days I did out of that six months, for that old drunk?"

"Dad!" Carleton would answer. "God will fix it so that you won't have to go back to jail. That's where you ought to go and start a mission."

"What about Brockton?" Jim would reply. "Don't you think Brockton's a pretty good place?" Jim had leanings toward Brockton, because it was near Whitman, his home town, where he had in his boyhood preached temperance.

"Brockton is all right. But why don't you try Providence first?" Carleton would question.

Carleton was so persistent, that Jim got Mr. Shepherd, the parole officer of the Salvation Army of New York, to see if he could get Jim a pardon. After a brief space of time Mr. Shepherd saw Jim and said:

"Boy, you've got some record down there. You've been arrested thirty-eight times in Providence, thrown into the hospital time and again, and as a general trouble maker, you've got them all beat. The police seem to think that you are trying to put something over on them — that you will get pardoned and then come down and start all over again. I can't make them seem to believe that you are a sober man and will remain sober. You'd better have your wife go down and see the governor, and tell him of the work you've already done up here. Take down letters from some big men like Brigadier Winchell, Thomas Noonan, and others, that know what you've done up here. It will probably help you."

Mrs. Parker did go to Rhode Island with letters from Brigadier Winchell and Thomas Noonan. At the Executive Mansion in the Rhode Island State House, she made known her mission in the presence of Abram J. Pothier, Governor of Rhode Island. He listened to her story with great interest, and finally sent her to the Attorney General of the State, recommending that he do all he could for Jim. Mrs. Parker pled with the Attorney General, but the decision was delayed so long that she had to return home and wait for the final action of the Rhode Island authorities.

There was living at the home of the Parkers, a strapping Irish lad by the name of Jack Reilly, who had been a soldier and sailor for many years. Days before, Carleton and Jim had been painting a water tower, when Jack approached Jim and said he wanted to see him — not for money, but for help in some other trouble. He wanted to know when Jim would be through work.

"Let's get through now," Carleton had interrupted. "If we let him go off the roof now, he may not come back. We can finish this job tomorrow." So they coiled up the ropes and went down to their home with Jack. There the stranger told Jim how, back during the war, he fought steadily on the front in the English Army. Then news came to him that his father had been drowned when a torpedo struck the ship on which his father was a sailor. Jack asked the authorities for a two-weeks furlough, so he could go back to Ireland to his mother. But the officials refused Jack his

request, because a big drive was prepared, and every man was needed. That disgusted Jack, so he deserted the army, boarded an American freighter, and came to the United States. He hadn't dared to write to his mother, for fear of being taken back to England and shot as a deserter. He had heard Jim tell his life story in the West Street Sailor's Institute, and had been one to take the pledge. He wanted Jim's advice — what should he do?

That was an easy problem for Jim, who had but recently read in the papers that the English Government had pardoned all deserters of the World War who had fought in their armies. When Jim imparted this information to Jack Reilly, he immediately wrote home to his widowed mother in Roxford, Ireland. Jack then went away to paint and rig, leaving his address with Jim. A short time after, a letter came to Jim from Roxford, Ireland, which he forwarded to Jack Reilly. From then on, Jack wrote to his mother every week, sending her \$10 with each letter, until he received word of her death. He then returned to Brooklyn, and at the invitation of the Parkers, lived in their Brooklyn home on Wythe Avenue. He helped Jim and Carleton at their work, and grew to know and love Carleton.

But Carleton was a sickly lad. The poor care his father had given him in boyhood made his body feeble. Many a time as a boy he had slept out of doors, exposed to the elements. In the early part of 1925 he grew weaker on account of heart trouble.

On March 15, 1925, Carleton joined the South Third Street Presbyterian Church, which his father and mother had joined a year before. During the following week he grew worse. The parents, for their boy's sake, moved to 76 South Second Street, where they lived in a house a little more bright and sunshiny than was their home on Wythe Avenue. Dr. Catlin, a wonderful old Christian man, cared for the lad. A Salvation Army nurse came to the home to attend Carleton and Mrs. Parker, who was run down from the work and worry.

Toward the last of the week, Carleton could keep no food on his stomach. He sat in an easy chair, growing weaker all the time. Sunday came, and he seemed to grow unconscious. At about six o'clock in the evening, the Salvation Army nurse, knowing that he did not have long to live, brought Jack into the room. She spoke to Carleton.

"Jack is here. Can you see his face?"

Carleton looked straight ahead and said in a clear, distinct, but weak voice:

"No. I can see nobody but Jesus now."

That was the last sentence he spoke, for within an hour those in the room saw him lean forward in his chair, and saw a light come over his face — as if he had seen something wonderful. Then he died.

It was Sunday, March 29, 1925 at 7 P. M., when God took Carleton Parker. His mother and father, Jack Reilly and the nurse, all wept. Jack went into

the kitchen, sat down to the table, and there scribbled off a little poem,

“Your eyes divine did not see mine,
When Jesus called you home.
You only saw your Saviour,
Waiting at the throne.

“Remember me, when Him you see.
Although we’re far apart —
I have had your company —
Your Saviour has your heart.”

A good composition for a rough, crude, boisterous Irishman.

The funeral took place on April 1, at 3 P. M., at the South Third Street Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn; Newell Wells, the pastor, officiated. When Jim entered the church, somebody told him that a man in a Salvation Army uniform had said that then was the time that the steeple jack would break, and, in all probability, return to drunkenness again. That statement made Jim bitter.

The church was packed. Brigadier Wallace Winchell and Major Samuel Wood, along with other Salvation Army officials, were present. Carleton Parks, of the Goodwill Industries of Brooklyn, Thomas Noonan of The Rescue Society of Chinatown, were among the Christian welfare leaders that attended.

Jack Reilly and some of the other young men friends of Carleton's acted as pall bearers.

Pastor Wells brought a stirring message, and after he had finished, Jim got up beside the casket. He told the people that the death of his son would be the means of keeping him cleaner, straighter, and more firm in the performance of the work that God had laid out before him. He told them that if any one who was a Christian could see in the death of that boy, and the clean way that God took him, leaving behind the firm knowledge that he was going to Heaven where it was his due — if they could see anything that would drive him back to drunkenness, thereby forfeiting the right to again see that boy throughout eternity, they had better get converted, because he did not believe in that kind of Christianity.

People eagerly listened to the words of the bereaved father. Afterwards, there was a good deal of talk about his declaration.

The following Sunday, the members of the church read in their church bulletin a notice: "Two weeks ago last Sunday, Carleton Leslie Parker was received into our communion on his confession of his faith in Jesus. On that day he received the two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. At that time no one would have imagined that his life here as a confessed follower of the Master was to be so short; but last Sunday he passed away. A few moments before his going, one asked him, 'Do you see me, Carleton?' And his answer was, 'I can see nobody but Jesus.'

We deeply sympathize with his parents, whose only child he was, but we congratulate them on their legacy of such a memory."

In that way the church which the Parkers had joined, honored a soul which had gone on.

CHAPTER XIII

PROVIDENCE MISSION

The South Third Street Presbyterian Church had given Jim employment, for during the spring and early summer, Jim repaired and painted their church building and steeple. About a week after his son's funeral, Mr. Shepherd, of the Salvation Army, got word from Rhode Island, through Mr. Lenscott, Warden of the State Prison, saying that, owing to Jim's new mode of life, they would not prosecute the old charges as long as he didn't take another drink of intoxicating liquor. Mr. Shepherd passed on that letter to Jim. It gave him new hope and joy. He planned to establish a mission in Providence as soon as possible.

With that object in view, Jim took a boat to Providence, hired a little mission hall on 351 South Main Street, and paid three months' rent in advance, so that the hall would be reserved for him until he could finish his work on the Presbyterian Church.

Providence was a city of contrasts. On South Main Street, where Jim had hired mission quarters, cheap lodging houses and second hand stores were in abundance. There, dirty-faced ragged children played in the gutters, while selfish fathers gambled their wages

away or spent them for moonshine. South Main Street ran along the base of a steep ascent, known as College Hill, made famous by its Brown University, founded by Baptist fathers for the education of their sons. The upper part of the hill was a sharp contrast to the lower part. Below there was poverty — on the hill there were riches; below, ignorance — above, learning; below, weeping — above, laughter; below, slavery — above, leisure.

College Street, going down the hill, crossed South Main Street at the base of the hill. There walked lofty Seniors, swaggering in baggy trousers and worldly wisdom. Or perhaps meek Freshmen, with their brown caps and white buttons. Most of them were all too grossly interested in mathematics, chemistry, biology, engineering, economics, English, Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, German, and other affairs of the mind, to go up South Main Street, to see the dull-eyed boys and girls, or to try to aid the unfortunate ones, who were born into miserable conditions, over which they had absolutely no control. Those same students had hundreds of dollars for football games, track meets, and baseball games in the big cities, dances at the Arcadia, Junior Proms, Senior Frolics, banquets, fine clothes, books, tuitions, room rents, board bills, fraternities, Pembroke College for Women, and so forth — but their souls grew heavy and they winced in sudden horror whenever a Tag Day came to town, or whenever the Brown Christian Association had a drive for funds.

Below the University, at the foot of College Hill, on 351 South Main Street, James Parker opened "Steeple Jim's Mission" on July 31st, 1925. Thomas Noonan came from New York at his own expense to help in the exercises. Drunks and bums filled the hall.

After a month of the preaching of the Word, Jim received notice that the building had been sold, and he would have to vacate immediately. He didn't know what to do. The Volunteers of America heard that he was losing his mission, and so they offered Jim a position as Superintendent of their men's work. Jim knew that the Volunteers of America in other cities were doing a wonderful work, and therefore readily accepted their offer. They rented for Jim an old bar-room at 356 South Main Street. There Jim worked for about three weeks, remodeling the hall and getting it cleaned up. The mission opened as "The Volunteers of America, Steeple Jim, Superintendent," and the first night his life story went over so well, that the officials came to him with this proposition: that he go and tell his life story at different churches, at which they were to make arrangements, and the collections which he got would be split between him and them.

Not liking that proposition, Jim found other work. On the 16th of October, 1925, he hired a former store at 260 Richmond Street, in a section where it was unsafe for a woman to travel unescorted — where drunks pan-handled and almost robbed well-dressed strangers who dared to venture there — and where moonshine

and home brew ruined the stomachs of many a poor man. Mr. Stratford, of the Lighthouse Mission in another section of the city, gave Jim five dollars, and with that, Jim got another Christian man to move his fixtures from Volunteer Hall to Richmond Street. On the 18th of October, 1925, that former bootlegger's hall became a Gospel Hall under the name of "Steeple Jim's Mission." Every evening Jim held a meeting and gave meals to all poor men who wanted food.

It hadn't been long after his mission opened that the press began to recognize Jim's work. He had obtained from Austin Colgate, son of Samuel Colgate — who started the soap and perfume company bearing his name — a card of introduction to Hon. Jesse Metcalf, United States Senator from Rhode Island. Jim visited the Senator and showed him the card. He did not ask for money, but did tell the Senator about the mission work. Now Jesse Metcalf had some influence with the *Providence Journal*, a reliable newspaper of national repute — which had been of great service during the war. Jim talked with Mr. Wilmot, former Universalist minister, who had taken over the religious work of the *Providence Journal*, and it was not long before a column appeared in that paper about Jim's wonderful moral comeback and his work for others.

Once Jim took in a man from the gutter, and fed him. He turned out to be a destitute artist. Jim got that man to paint him several large pictures — one showing Christ in the garden of Gethsemane, and

another showing Him in the slums, with outstretched arms, saying to a drunkard, "Come unto me." There were others, and they were all hung on the walls of the mission.

Jim went up to the University on the hill, and there interviewed George Heidt, Secretary of the Christian Association. He, in turn, invited the Association Cabinet, which was made up of a few, selected from the College, to accompany him on a visit to "Steeple Jim's Mission." In that group was William Braisted, President of the Association, George Tsukuno, a Japanese student from Seattle, Washington, and other Brown boys. They all spoke at the mission, and were greatly impressed with the work.

Many a drunkard did Jim pick up, turn from his course, and send sober on the straight and narrow path. But many a disappointment did Jim have, when those who had promised to go straight, got to drinking again — or proved untrue. In that winter, Jim took into his home one Joe Bailey, whom he had picked up in the gutter — starving. The lad seemed grateful, told of how he had been led astray, and sobered up. Jim found him talented, for he played the organ at the meetings; he could offer prayer like a minister, and could testify in prayer-meeting fashion. When Jim and his wife went away in the latter part of May, to visit their son's grave, Jim left Joe in charge of the mission. But when the Parkers returned, they found that Joe had disappeared with \$200 — all that Jim had saved from his work — along with Jim's

clothes and trinkets which his son had given him years before. Jim was an angry man, and it was only when he got on his knees and prayed to God for a long time, that his wrath abated, and forgiving love took its place.

A cartoon appeared in the *Providence Journal*, showing how the meanest thief in the world had made off with Jim's possessions, while the missionary and his wife were visiting their son's grave.

Jim moved to another old bootlegger's hall at 216 Richmond Street. Jim also ran a second hand clothing store across the street, and sent out a truck to collect papers, old shoes and clothes. In the winter and spring he was very successful, and even employed men to help him out. He gave away clothing to all the poor of the neighborhood who were worthy. He also gave them food. Every night he prepared meals for the hungry homeless men. There was great need for such work, yet those interested were few.

Almost single handed Jim had to work. He painted flag poles and steeple jacked, to help run his mission. He received no \$2000 to \$7000 a year salary, such as some professional workers in the city were getting. His wages many times were slams and reproaches. Some friends deserted him, because they thought he was trying to advertize himself too much. Yet they had not known the facts, and could not judge. They had not known what God had commanded Jim to do — "To live under the same name, and live it clean." They did not seem to realize that Jim had had no college training. Jim had but one sermon — that was

his life story, and how Jesus Christ, who had saved him, could also save all people.

Many visitors came to the mission. Jim's platform was reserved for visitors, and at times all the seats were taken. One time a clergyman in a swallow-tailed frock came in, and took a seat. When it came time for the testimony meeting he got up and spoke words like these:

"We, in this modern day, in the day of science and enlightenment, can no longer believe in the Virgin Birth — "

But there Jim grabbed him by the coat tail and interrupted the astonished angel of light with a loud:

"Sit down! We don't allow any of that stuff in here! The Book says that One was born of a Virgin, even Jesus Christ!"

The minister argued, and told how he had planned to put a dollar in the collection. Jim said he didn't want the lousy dollar. Finally, in disgust, the stranger left. Jim allowed no heretics to speak in his mission; all Christian denominations were represented at his mission, and all were allowed to speak — that was not heresy to Jim. But if anybody slandered the Lord and Saviour, that was heresy to Jim. "Modayism," he called it.

And what message would that enlightened gentleman have brought to those drunken slaves, handcuffed and bound by the fetters of sin? Would he have given them Aristotle, Plato, or Aristophanes? And what

good could those speculators have done for a sinner?
Not one thing!

However, Jim did attract to his aid a few loyal men. Among those were Mason Brown, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Providence — which Jim joined. Also, William B. Andrews, a mason by trade, of the Adventist Church, who himself had formerly been a drunkard, contributed heavily from his wages to the support of Steeple Jim's Mission. Also Mr. George Fooks, of a Baptist Church in the city, aided Jim in his work, and led one meeting a week for some time.

One day, when Jim was penniless, and didn't know where his next meal was coming from, a certain Roman Catholic came to him and said:

"I know you're doing a fine work, and I would like to help you. But since I am a Catholic, it would be against the mandates of my church to contribute to your cause."

Jim invited the man to his second-hand clothing store, where he showed him a list of men whom he had given clothes to. There were names like "Mulligan," "Shaughnessy," "O'Donnell," "Flaherty," "O'Brien," and other Irish Catholic names.

"Enough, enough!" said the stranger, as Jim read over more names. "Here's five dollars to help out in the work."

Then Jim explained that his work was interdenominational — that he helped all men in need, regardless of their creeds.

In the early part of 1927, Jim again moved a short way from his former mission, to 55 Ship Street, another ex-booze center. He had not been there long before he organized a group of men to help in his work: William B. Andrews, President; a Brown University student, Vice President; A. Mason Brown (pastor of the First Presbyterian Church) Treasurer, and George Fooks, Secretary.

That was a victory for Jim, to get some support and help from a few interested men. But not all was victory for Jim; that winter had had many disappointments. One man, whom Jim had helped, robbed the poor box. Another solicited funds for the mission, and kept most of the money for himself. Some friends, not understanding Jim's temperament or the results that the booze he had consumed left in his body, deserted him.

Yet those disappointments were replaced by many gratifying results. Scores of men repented, accepted Christ, and lived clean lives. One Joseph Hughes, whose mother and father, both drunkards, had been taken away to jail when he was but a boy of seven, had lived a bum's and drunkard's life for about forty years. No one had ever tried to convert him — no one had ever tried to do anything for him until Jim picked him up from the gutter, gave him food and lodgings, told his life story to him, and finally won him to Jesus Christ. That man Hughes, from then on, lived a clean sober life, joined the Presbyterian Church, found a good job, and contributed about two

dollars a week toward the work of the mission. Mr. Hughes was but one of many whom Jim, through the Gospel, turned from darkness unto light, from death to life, from Satan to God.

The police were very friendly with Jim. There was one, who years before had tussled with Jim — Jim had taken away the officer's stick and broken his wrist. He became such a good friend of Jim's, that one summer they took a week's vacation together. At one police station the policemen took up a collection to help Jim's work — and the subscription list included the names of all the policemen of that station, and the total of the contribution was \$11.35. It was claimed that since Steeple Jim had come to the Richmond Street district, it was safe for a woman to go unaccompanied at night through slums that formerly were of the lowest character and dangerous for strangers to pass through.

The mission services themselves were interesting. An average of twenty-five or thirty men attended those meetings every night. Long passages from the Bible were read, for Jim loved the Bible, and spent many hours privately studying it. The men sang heartily, accompanied by the music which came from an old organ that the Adventist Church had given them. Sometimes there were disturbances in the meetings — when over-zealous drunkards wanted to preach. One chronic offender was "Happy," a man who had squandered a large fortune he had inherited. He had become diseased, so that parts of his shin bones were

eaten away. Most of the day he walked about the streets, smiling at people, saying "Happy's all right," and trying to beg money with which to buy moonshine.

Jim usually led the meetings. However, for a time, Mr. George Fooks took charge of one service every week, and the Brown student another service each week. Also, every now and then evangelists came from Faith Home (a Pentacostal Institution in East Providence, where about seventy-five young people were studying for the ministry) to expound the Word of God. They seemed to have a zeal and sincerity that was lacking in certain other Theological Institutions, where professors crammed the minds of their students with doubts, rather than faith. The Pentacostal peculiarity of talking "in tongues" for the Master, was not nearly so odd as the peculiarity of many so-called religious men, who did no talking for the Master at all.

All the time, Mrs. Parker helped Jim with the singing and the Industrial work. All that time, though, she was wasting away. The past had left her barely alive, and it was, indeed, miraculous that God spared her for work. In the spring of 1927, she was afflicted with dizzy spells, piercing headaches, and even a propensity to wander. She said she would like to die at any time, to be with her boy; but duty kept her alive, and the mission work was what she lived for. When the summer came, Jim's doctor told him that she needed a change. To make matters worse, Jim fell from a chimney he had been painting, and broke his

elbow, which necessitated the removal of several broken bone fragments. His picture again appeared in the *Providence Journal*, and an article telling of how Jim would be able to work no more was published with it.

Mr. Frederick A. Wilmot made out the following letter, by which Jim could solicit funds:

“To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that the bearer, James A. Parker, well-known in Providence as ‘Steeple Jim,’ is an efficient missionary and conducts a Mission for Homeless Men on 55 Ship Street, Providence. An accident sustained by a drop of 16 feet while working at the Price Fire and Waterproofing Company, Poughkeepsie, N. Y., has incapacitated him for the present season, and he solicits your Christian help, not in his own support, nor that of his wife, who are otherwise provided for, but for the work of his Mission, which does a splendid work of salvation for needy men, and where daily an average of 50 meals are served to men in dire want. Your subscription will go to the object named and we indorse his work.

Frederick A. Wilmot — Oct. 19, '27
Religious Editor — Providence
Journal and Evening Bulletin.”

Jim went to a few of his friends with that letter, and received twenty-nine signed subscriptions amounting to \$100.50. Among those who gave were James E.



Courtesy Providence *Journal*

STEEPLE JIM *The Christian*

Photograph taken after Jim's fall from building in Poughkeepsie,
New York

Dunne, Mayor of Providence, and Abram J. Pothier, Governor of Rhode Island. The governor told Jim that he had watched his progress in the papers; he heartily endorsed Jim's work, and gave him further encouragement. A prominent lawyer in the city also helped, with many business men, and others of importance.

Along the first of November, some of the buildings around Jim's mission, where many men lodged, were torn down. The old Montreal House, next to the mission, (and in pre-prohibition days famous for its booze, lice, and vermin), due to Jim's work was condemned by the State Board of Health. Although Jim's mission rent and running expenses had been guaranteed by certain prominent men in the city who had become interested in the work, and although during the summer months the Ship Street establishment had been painted inside and newly equipped, Jim decided to transfer his work to Brockton. His decision was also brought about by his doctor's warning — that unless his wife Hattie had a change, insanity or death might result.

Thus the Providence mission came to an end. Jim had met with success and failure; he had experienced victories and defeats; but he had won hosts of men and women who glorified God for the power of His Son Jesus. During their Providence mission, Mrs. Parker kept a systematic record of a few things ac-

complished. And those books showed that over 12,000 meals were given away to hungry men, about 3,500 pieces of clothing given away to the clotheless, over 900 lodgings arranged for homeless strangers, 43 pieces of furniture given to men starting to build homes again, 209 Christmas presents distributed among poor children, and over 500 men came forward in his meetings, professing conversion. The actual number of persons, who, hearing Jim, were actually converted — their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

During his Providence mission Jim told his life story to audiences at the Christian Adventist Church, the First Baptist Church, the Mt. Pleasant Street Baptist Church, the Round Top Congregational Church, the Trinity Methodist Church, the First Presbyterian Church — all in Providence. At Edgewood he spoke at the Norwegian Reformed Church on Pennsylvania Avenue; at Smithfield, in the Union Church; at Georgeville, in the Baptist Church; at Brockton, Mass., in the Porter Congregational Church; at North Scituate, Mass., in the Baptist Church; and at Springfield, Mass., in The Rescue Mission. Jim also had held open air meetings in Providence and elsewhere — spreading the Gospel Tidings wherever he went.

Yet Jim found time to ply his trade. He painted the flag poles on the Flint Adaskin Furniture Company, the Lily Building, and the Commercial National Bank; the smokestacks on the American Emery Wheel Works, the East Side Garage, and the American Screw Company; at West Bridgewater, Mass., he re-

topped the chimneys for the Brockton Heel Company, at Easton, Mass., for the Eastern Machine Works, and at Whitman, Mass., for the Hall Brothers Laundry. He painted the two big signs on the Salvation Army Memorial Hotel on the Bowery, New York City; the smokestacks for Mr. Carleton Park of the Goodwill Society, Brooklyn, and the flag pole for the King Paint Works, Brooklyn.

CHAPTER XIV

BROCKTON MISSION

On November 16, 1927, Jim opened his mission at 65 Church Street, Brockton, Massachusetts. His coming was heralded by articles in the Brockton *Enterprise*. Jim had taken "French leave" of Brockton some fifteen years before, the day he was due to appear in court to answer for a drunken brawl. In return for an unpaid fine, Jim, during his Providence mission, had painted the flag pole on City Hall to remunerate the city. Now he was to remunerate the same city even more.

The opening night the Brown University student who had been interested in the work gave the opening address. Representatives from various churches were present, and nearly filled the hall. Many of Jim's associates of drunken days were there to find out what kind of a "line" Jim had.

After a few weeks' effort, there was a marked improvement in Jim's audience. Many drunkards began to sober, and when they had come to themselves again, they publicly professed conversion. One of the attendants of the mission had himself arrested, and asked the judge to sentence him for a month, so that he could sober up. A prominent Swede in the

city, who had been drinking moonshine at the "Moose's hang out" in Brockton, came to Jim's house, professed conversion, and from that time on lived a sober life. That was just one case of many.

Jim fed the men every night, and was assisted in that work by old Ned Galligan, who had followed him from New York City to Providence and then to Brockton. Many received food at the mission, who otherwise would have had to starve or commit burglary.

Pictures of the mission and of Mr. and Mrs. Parker appeared in the Brockton *Enterprise*. Jim spoke before the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Jim's name went abroad, and many friends, both old and new, came to visit the mission. A Brockton Salvation Army Captain put his hand on Jim's shoulder one day, and in a kindly tone told him to keep up the good work. Alexander Ricard, of the Mohican Market, helped Jim out with gifts, and offered him meats and other produce at half price.

Shortly before Christmas, Jim, with a crippled arm, flirted with death to help his mission fund. He perched atop the City Hall flag pole, while some of his helpers took up a collection of money from the spectators below. Lack of alcohol or a broken elbow could not rob Jim of his nerve. When Christmas came Jim fed ninety-eight hungry men with dinners of pork tenderloin, cabbage, carrots, potatoes, turnips, pie, and all the bread and coffee they could wish. At the time there was great unemployment in Brockton, for the shoe industry was shifting out West, leaving penniless,

former high wage earners. They flocked to the mission doors, were fed with food both bodily and spiritual.

"We had 'em down here Saturday night singing Christmas carols instead of drinking Christmas moonshine," Jim told the reporter of the *Enterprise*.

The editors of the Brockton *Enterprise* were very friendly with Jim. The City Marshall came down and spoke at Jim's mission, as did the minister of the Porter Congregational Church. One Swedish Church sent some forty odd members to the mission one night, to express their appreciation for the salvaging of one of their own — a young man, whom they had vainly tried to rescue. That young man went forward at one of Jim's meetings, gave his heart to Christ, joined his own church, and lived a clean life. No wonder those church members were eager to see the man who, by the grace of God, had rescued their wandering boy. Many church members helped Jim. One Seventh Day Adventist and his wife were of great assistance. They made all the paper flowers for Jim's tag day. John McTighe, a rescued drunkard, became known as the Deacon of Steeple Jim's Mission; he and his wife were helpers in the work.

In March, 1928, wanting better quarters for his work, Jim moved his mission to 34 Franklin Street. The building had been an old bootleg rendezvous. Without missing an evening service in the moving, Jim began to put out sunshine in the former moonshine hall. The American Legion, through a Mr.

Reardon, gave Jim money with which to buy a truck. Jim hired a vacant building next to the mission. With the aid of helpers, he soon filled the two lower stories with second-hand furniture of all sorts. On an adjacent street, he opened a large second-hand clothing store. His initial stock was the left-overs of three church rummage sales, which he acquired by asking for them. Other donations kept the store well filled with merchandise.

Before the summer came, Jim had, besides the clothing shop, a mission hall, and a large dining room. He employed several men, who could not have obtained work elsewhere in the city. His stores sold articles at low prices; and if a deserving customer had no money with which to buy, Jim never hesitated to give that person the article or articles most needed. At his mission meetings in the evening, he continued to have remarkable conversions. One man who went forward in times past had been quite prominent in affairs of the city. But strong drink had dragged him down. He was converted at the mission, and great was his progress back to his former position of honor and respect.

A happy event took place in the latter part of the summer. Jim gave 177 Brockton kiddies a truck trip to the airplane landing station. The Brockton Public Market gave candy for the occasion, and the Mo-hican Market furnished watermelon. Needless to say, the youngsters had a good time.

In the Fall, at a Brockton Ministers' Meeting, the clergymen endorsed Jim's work, and complimented him for his Christian endeavor. Thus approved by them, as well as by the public in general, he had little trouble in raising \$244.73 at a tag day. The total would have been more, had not one of his "friends" stolen over \$19. The thief was apprehended, and although Jim pleaded for the man, the judge sentenced the transgressor to several months in jail, and branded him as the meanest thief in Brockton. All of the mission funds went toward Christian work for unfortunate people — food for the hungry, clothes for the naked, and a home for the homeless. Jim hoarded up no private fortune, nor did he possess a savings account of over a few dollars.

The local papers continued to write about his work. They considered his life a most unusual one, and continually turned to Jim for unusual news. The *Boston Herald*, in its issue of September 23, devoted two half columns of its news section to Jim.

Mrs. Parker continued to improve. She wore the best clothes that came into her husband's store. She would try on a bright calico dress one day, and a satin gown the next. But gowns and finery did not hide her slender form, which still suffered from the years in which a no-good husband had not cared for her. Jim realized his responsibility, and did all he could for her comfort and happiness.

Jim hoped to spend the last of his life at Brockton,

trying to found some permanent institution. It had been in Brockton in a house on Court Street, that Jim's mother had died years before, praying for her son. Two years later, Jim's father had died at the Brockton House — a drunkard, borne down with life's cares. No wonder Jim wanted to help that city.

"Yes," some *wise* man would say. "All these drunkards go to Jim's mission for is to get something to eat."

That may have been the case with many, as it had been with Jim, years before. Yet nearly half of those attending the meetings did not stay after services for the suppers. At Brockton, as elsewhere, some of Jim's friends were offended by his rough exterior. But his real friends overlooked his unpolished surface, and loved the heart of the man.

After a few weeks in Brockton, Jim began to have converts give testimonies for themselves. One would say:

"I thank God for keeping me this day, and praise the holy name of Jesus for what He has done for me. Life has been a joy since Jesus has come into my heart."

Another quite common testimony would be: "Jim Parker has done more for me than any other living man. I want to thank God for sending us Jim Parker."

Jim, in his addresses, would never take credit for himself. Rather, he gave the glory to God. Some people mistook his life story.

"His past is nothing to brag about," they would say. But Jim wasn't bragging; he was telling of his past in order to warn people that the way of alcohol was a way to hell. And indeed, there has been no example brought to public attention in the past years, of a man who served alcohol as long as he had, to make such a remarkable comeback as did Jim Parker. He stands unique as a character and as a Soldier of Jesus Christ.

Jim's philosophy of life changed. He began to believe that God had allowed him to go through those experiences so that his life might stand out as a warning to all youth and men of all nations — that to serve Mammon means suffering and death in the end — but to serve God means joy and everlasting life. Jim saw how his life had been spared so many times: in Trout Cove, when he was rescued from drowning just in the nick of time; in Bear River, when he was snatched from the very brink of the rapids and sure death; on the ocean, when he was one of two to survive the shipwreck that cost his ten mates their lives, (and the other that was rescued lost his life but a few weeks later); in Larchmont Manor, when he fell seventy feet, broke his back, but recovered in spite of what doctors had predicted; in Blairstown, where by mere chance he had caught hold of a window sill and was rescued from the jaws of death; and on numerous occasions, all of which were hair-breadth escapes. Jim began to see God's hand in it all. He had been saved for a purpose, and that was to warn a drunken

people, that the only way from misery and selfishness is the way of the Cross.

WRITTEN AFTER JIM'S DEATH — AND THEREFORE NOT REVIEWED BY HIM

The twenty-eighth anniversary of the Parker wedding on October 26 was a gala affair, with friends from East Bridgewater, Boston, Malden, Whitman, and other surrounding towns as guests. Superintendent Ott of the Springfield Rescue Mission led in prayer. City Marshal Herbert Boyden, after stressing the evils that follow drinking, urged everybody to stand squarely behind Jim in the work of human rescue. Then, in behalf of Mr. Parker, he presented the astonished Mrs. Parker with a wrist watch.

On Jim's first anniversary in the city he fed some seventy-five down and out men at the evening service. Mayor Bent and J. F. Reilly of the Chamber of Commerce paid tribute to Jim. During Jim's first year in Brockton 5913 meals, 305 pieces of clothing, and over 100 night's lodgings had been given away. 116 men had professed conversion — but the true influence of his year's ministry he nor anybody else ever knew.

Thanksgiving day Jim fed the scores who flocked to his doors — and also distributed food among the poor.

As Christmas approached he started collecting money for needy families and children's toys. To aid his fund once again he climbed to the top of the flag pole on City Hall, and held spectators breathless as he

painted the staff. But before he had mounted the pole he had whispered to one of his friends:

"That's the last time I ever shall do a climbing job."

The Brockton *Times* and the Brockton *Enterprise* both aided Jim in his work. But the latter paper and organization loved and served him best. Many times did Mr. Fuller and others settle for the debts Jim incurred in carrying on the work. Ralph Paulding, of the staff, often attended the meetings, aided the poor and unemployed with Jim, and wrote many articles in the *Enterprise* about him. Jim had a way of "working under the vest" of all he met. Among the clergy of the city, F. F. G. Donaldson and E. Roy Myers were most friendly. The Y. M. C. A. also befriended Jim and had him speak at one of their meetings. Mr. Chambers, of that organization, led the Thursday evening meetings at the mission, and also provided for special music.

Christmas day came. Captain Leys and Patrolman Irving, with one of the police trucks, helped Jim distribute several bushel baskets of food for the needy.

On Friday, December 28, Jim, aided by his wife, Mayor and Mrs. Bent, Miss Doris Jones (the Mayor's secretary), Mrs. Mabel Faunce, Mrs. Ruth Faunce, Mrs. John Parker of Marion, Mrs. Edith McLaughlin, Anton Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Bellows, Walter Dalton, Mrs. Berner Shaw, and Mrs. Ida Thompson, gave a Christmas party to about 300 children. "A toy and bit of sweetmeat for every child" was Jim's motto. Patrolman George Wilber, stationed at the

door, "weeded out" the would be "repeaters." Mayor Bent, chief executive of a city of about 68,000, seemed quite at home with Jim and his mission work, and when they ran out of toys, he put \$5 with another of Jim's with which to buy more. "Anything I've got that Jim wants, he can have," Mayor Bent was heard to say to a friend.

Just before the Friday evening service on January 4, 1929, Jim remarked to a member of his family: "Help me make this a good meeting, for who knows but what it may be my last."

It was his last.

For on Saturday the meeting was omitted, and Sunday morning he was taken sick and slept from 7 P. M. until the next morning. Then at the Brockton Hospital, to which he was transferred, he continued to sink until early Tuesday morning, when he died before his family could be summoned to his bedside. The day before Jim had received the comforting assurance of the God who sustained him, from E. Roy Myers, pastor of the Central M. E. Church. The last words he had given to his friends were:

"Whatever happens, carry on, carry on!" Steeple Jim died climbing higher.

The doctors and papers reported that Jim had acute pulmonary edema, a lung congestion. Those who knew Jim realized that his tired body, scarred by many battles, and containing many broken bones, could stand no attack of disease or poison.

As the news of Jim's death spread through the city,

a pall of gloom also spread with it. The City Minister's Association was in session when the news came. In grief they bowed in silent prayer for a few minutes. The news that the Great Missioner had called Steeple Jim to his side was broadcasted by the radio and syndicated by the press throughout the country. One woman who lived some distance from Brockton, testified that she heard the unwelcome news four different times in a brief period from four different broadcasting stations.

The *Times* and *Enterprise* gave much space to Jim that day — the *Enterprise*, with its 25,000 circulation, came out in its headlines with an account of the death. Mayor Bent wrote that day in its columns:

"The community loses a diligent and ardent Christian, whose work among the less fortunate citizens of the city is bound to have lasting results, although he is not here to carry on. He gave unsparing of his time and efforts to his missionary endeavors and his memory will long be cherished in the hearts of hundreds whom he helped."

The Wednesday *Enterprise* headed its editorial column with the following:

"STEEPLE JIM CLIMBS HIGHER

Only since November of 1927, when he opened a little mission in a side street, had Brockton known Steeple Jim Parker, who died yesterday morning. Within two years he had become a town character, his 30 years

of squalor, drunkenness, disorder, wanderings, and recklessness known to everybody; he had become a city missionary whose sincerity was unchallenged and whose zeal to salvage human driftwood received unqualified indorsement. Steeple Jim was a character in all the word implies, a person embodying peculiar or notable traits. Young as the span of life is now reckoned, for he was in his 48th year, he had said in contrite rather than boastful spirit that his police record included 500 arrests for drunkenness and brawling, beginning in Whitman when he was only 13 years old.

Boy preacher, painter, tramp, steeplejack and adventurer during the years before he staggered into the Doyers Street Mission in New York in 1923, his emotional reaction to religion might well have been viewed with distrust. So many of the conversions under such circumstances are disappointing.

But in Steeple Jim the faith which flickered into life there grew into a strong and steady flame, warming within him a passion to serve the sort of men with whom he passed his dissolute days. Other men have redeemed themselves. Few have lifted up others, as Steeple Jim did. Those whom he fed, whom he clothed, whom he cheered back to sobriety and self-respect, and all who watched his tireless devotion to the submerged, feel that in death the bold and restless spirit that was his has made its highest climb."

And on the same page of the same paper (whose editors and owners had befriended Jim in his work of the Gospel) there appeared this poem:

"GONE FAR ALOFT

Steeple Jim, a fair, square guy,
Takes his longest climb — to the sky
Or wherever a Promised Land
Awaits earnest, kindly souls.
Jim held out a helping hand,
A haven of refuge and word of cheer,
To men of the hard luck band,
A fellow with a great big heart
And infinite pity for the under dog.
The down and out will sure miss Jim;
This world is sweeter for chaps like him!"

On Wednesday hundreds were seen at Jim's bier, which lay in state at the little mission hall on Franklin Street. Scores of the men were converts; some of them kneeled by the body to pray. Business men, women in fur coats, ragged boys and girls, ex-drunks and convicts, filed into the mission to say a comforting word to the widow, and shed a tear for the departed one. At the song service in the afternoon, Jim's favorite hymn: "Mother's Prayers Have Followed Me," was sung twice. The people would first gaze at the large pictures (which covered the walls of the Mission) of the pleading Christ, and then at the cold form of Steeple Jim.

The funeral services were held on Thursday afternoon at the Sampson Funeral Home at 3 o'clock. From New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and other

distant points, people flocked to pay tribute to the fallen comrade. To say that the funeral home was packed, would be no exaggeration. E. Roy Myers, pastor of the Central M. E. Church, officiated. Soon after, during the shedding of many tears, his body was committed to the ground at Colebrook Cemetery, Whitman, where reposed the bodies of his father and mother.

Although Jim's body is dead, his work has just begun. Some have prophesied that as long as there are eyes to read with, as long as there are ears to hear, as long as there are lips to speak with, so long will the story of Steeple Jim, one of the great multitude of those redeemed by the blood of the Lamb of God, even Jesus Christ His only begotten Son, be told to the peoples of the world.

Glory to God, and to the greatest power for social betterment, world peace, redemption, and salvation that this world has ever known, even the power of His living Gospel. Carry on!

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